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# ...c Wrong Mr. Wright

...ORGE H. BROADHURST

SAMUEL FRENCH, 28-30 West 38th St., New York

# THE WRONG MR. WRIGHT

An Original Comedy in Three Acts

BY

GEORGE H. BROADHURST

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# THE WRONG MR. WRIGHT

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## CHARACTERS

SEYMOUR SITES, who assumes the name of Mr. Wright.
WAYLAND CLINGSTONE, one of the boys long ago.
FREDERICK BONDS, Sites' nephew.
CAPTAIN CROSBY, stationed at Fortress Monroe.
LORD BRAZENFACE, from the old country.
FRONT, who runs the Hotel.
DAVID CLEWS, a fearless detective.
JULIA BONDS, Sites' niece.
TILLIE BIRD, Miss Bonds' maid.
ARABELLA CLINGSTONE, an unappropriated angel.
HENRIETTA OLIVER, a fin de siecle detective.

PLACE. Old Point Comfort. TIME. To-day.

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# The Wrong Mr. Wright.

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## ACT I

SCENE:—*Bright. Parlor of the Hygeia Hotel, Old Point Comfort. Entrances: to office* L. U. E., *Ladies' entrance* L. 2. *To elevator* R. U. E.; *verandah* C., *looking on to beach. Parlor furnished in style customary at seaside hotels, with sofa* L.; *water-cooler up stage* C.; *large mirror up stage* R. C.; *small writing desk and two chairs* R. *On desk a large square blotter, pen and ink. The entrance to the office shows the clerk's desk with register, gong, etc. The elevator is practical.*

CURTAIN:—*At rise of curtain sounds of approaching carriage wheels heard* L. *The single ring of the clerk's gong is heard and a voice in the office calls "*FRONT*". "*FRONT*" enters from office* L. U. *He is the average bell-boy, and wears the hotel livery.*

FRONT. (*going to* L. 2) Something is going to happen. That three-thirty boat's on time. (*exit* L. 2)

(*Enter* FRED *and* JULIA L. 2. FRED *is about twenty-one years old and is dressed in fashionable sum-*

*mer attire.* JULIA *is about twenty-three and is dressed in plain but stylish traveling costume. While* JULIA'S *dress is fashionable it must not betray too many evidences of wealth.*)

FRED. (*crosses* C.) Wait here a moment, Julia, while I see if the rooms have been reserved.

(*Exit* FRED *to office* L. U. *Enter* TILLIE *and* FRONT L. 2, *with suit case, two tennis rackets, two umbrellas, hat box, parasol, etc.* TILLIE *is about the same age as* JULIA *and her dress is more handsome than that of the usual maid.*)

JULIA. (R. C.) Is that everything, Tillie?

TILLIE. (L. C.) There's one more valise, Miss.

FRONT. (*leaves grip up* L.) And I'll go and get that.

(*Exit* FRONT L. 2.)

JULIA. You are quite sure there is nothing else?

TILLIE. Quite sure, Miss.

(*Sounds of retreating carriage wheels heard* L. *Re-enter* FRONT *with valise, picks up suit case* L.)

FRONT. That's the lot, Miss.

(*Re-enter* FRED L. U.)

FRED. (*crosses down* C.) Everything satisfactory, Julia. They reserved the rooms according to my wire. You have Suite A.; I have Parlor B.

FRONT. Shall I show you to your rooms, Sir?

FRED. Not just now.

JULIA. You may show my maid to mine. (*to* TILLIE) See that everything is all right and let me know.

FRONT. (*to* TILLIE) This way to the elevator.

(*Exeunt* FRONT *and* TILLIE *to elevator* R. U., *carrying valises, hat boxes, tennis raquets, etc.*)

FRED. (C. L.) I wonder what Uncle Seymour will say when he learns we have left Cape May?

JULIA. (C.) He can say a great deal; he can't do anything.

FRED. Oh, but he can. He can refuse to send funds. We haven't been stinting ourselves and this place is going to keep up the average.

JULIA. (*sits* L., *faces* FRED) Will it be very expensive?

FRED. They'll certainly go as far as the law allows. And when I write home and ask for more cash —well, you know Uncle Seymour.

JULIA. But it is my money.

FRED. Not till you are twenty-three. Really, Julia, I should have refused to come.

JULIA. How can you say such a thing. You don't appreciate my feelings in the matter.

FRED. That's right, Julia, I don't. Most girls wouldn't object to having it known that they have a million in their own right but you seem to regard the money as a most undesirable attachment.

JULIA. And so it is. It makes me suspect every man I meet of being an adventurer.

FRED. Every one?

JULIA. How am I to discriminate? There is no sign-manual to a man's attentions. I wish grandma had left the money to you instead of to me.

FRED. That's very good of you, but I'm glad she didn't. I'll get enough from Uncle Seymour.

JULIA. The worst of it is my fortune attracts the men I despise and repels those I wish to know.

FRED. But will it be different here?

JULIA. At home in San Francisco everybody knew I was an heiress. That was inevitable. On this, our first trip East, well meaning friends have published the fact wherever we have been. Now how is it here?

FRED. Why, we haven't a single acquaintance so far as we know.

JULIA. Exactly. So why shouldn't I, under the circumstances, be able to make some friends on whose disinterestedness I can positively rely?

FRED. (*lightly but affectionately*) And when you have found someone who is "disinterested" you expect to fall in love, marry, and live happily ever after. That's the idea, isn't it?

JULIA. (*rises*) Don't be foolish, Fred. I'm in no hurry to marry. And of one thing you may be sure, I never shall until I am certain the man loves me for myself alone. (*turns up stage* R. C. FRED *starts to follow*)

(*Enter* CLINGSTONE R. 2 L. U. *Age about fifty. Dress and make-up to indicate a sanctimonious man.*)

CLINGSTONE. (*crosses down* C.) Mr. Bonds, I believe.

FRED. (C.) Yes sir.

CLINGSTONE. (R. C.) I saw your name on the register and thought I could not be mistaken. I knew your father, Mr. Bonds.

FRED. Indeed.

CLINGSTONE. Your uncle, Mr. Sites, and I were exceedingly warm friends in my youth. My name is Wayland Clingstone.

FRED. (*surprised*) Are you the Mr. Clingstone who went to college with uncle?

CLINGSTONE. I am.

FRED. (*warmly*) Then I'm glad to know you, sir, very glad.

CLINGSTONE. Thank you.

FRED. I've heard of you, sir. The escapades of uncle and you during your college days are traditions, sir. Professor Townsend says you were the worst brace of scapegraces that ever trod the campus.

(JULIA *up stage* C., *listening.*)

CLINGSTONE. My friend, my dear young friend, abstain, please abstain from further reference to those humiliating events.

FRED. Your names are held in reverence I assure you. The brush with which uncle painted the policeman's face, and the lamp-post you stole from in front of the station——!

CLINGSTONE. Don't, please don't mention those things now. The recollection is very painful. I have changed since then.

(TILLIE *enters from elevator* R. U.—*joins* JULIA L. C. UP.)

FRED. Yes sir, you have changed. And so has uncle.

CLINGSTONE. It affords me much joy to recall that I, who was his companion in his wildness was also instrumental in turning his feet into the path of truth.

FRED. How was that, sir?

CLINGSTONE. Mr. Sites continued his wicked ways—and they were wicked ways—till he was about twenty-six years old. Then he met my sister and he who had scoffed at Cupid, fell desperately in love.

FRED. Uncle in love! That's funny.

(JULIA *and* TILLIE *slowly working down* L.)

CLINGSTONE. My sister refused him. It was a

hard blow but the chastisement brought its own reward. It showed him the error of his ways and made him a changed man.

FRED. That accounts for uncle's views of women in general and matrimony in particular.

CLINGSTONE. And for several other things also. Since then he has not spent his substance in riotous living.

FRED. No, nor in any other way. The hand that was formerly open to all is now closer than a combination lock.

CLINGSTONE. But your sister? She is with you I believe.

(CLINGSTONE R., FRED C., JULIA *and* TILLIE L. *At "sister"* JULIA *steps back leaving* TILLIE *in the line of sight.*)

FRED. Yes. (*looks* L., *sees* TILLIE) Do you know where——!

CLINGSTONE. (*interrupting and crossing* L.) Ah. This is your sister! I might have known it. She is so like her father.

(JULIA *crosses to* FRED R. C.)

TILLIE. You are making a big mistake.

CLINGSTONE. Pardon me, but I am not. We have met before only you can't remember it. I used to hold you on my knee, and kiss you.

TILLIE. I guess not.

CLINGSTONE. Yes I had. You and your brother.

FRED. But, Mr. Clingstone——!

(TILLIE *goes to* JULIA.)

JULIA. (*apart, interrupting*) Don't correct him I have a plan.

(*Enter* CAPTAIN CROSBY R. 2. *About thirty-five*

*years old, dashing, handsome, attired in dress of U. S. army.*)

CLINGSTONE. (*crossing to* CROSBY *while* TILLIE *crosses to* JULIA) My dear Ralph. So glad to see you.

CAPTAIN. (*crosses* C. FRED *drops down* R., JULIA *down* R. C., TILLIE *down* C. R.) Same here, uncle, I assure you.

JULIA. (*to* TILLIE) Don't deny anything he says.

TILLIE. (*to* JULIA) But he thinks I am you.

JULIA. (*to* TILLIE) And I want him to think it.

(TILLIE C., CLINGSTONE L. C., CAPTAIN L. C., FRED R. C., JULIA R.)

CLINGSTONE. (L.) You've come just at the right moment, Ralph. Let me introduce you to Miss Bonds (TILLIE *bows*) and to her brother Mr. Bonds. (CAPTAIN *crosses to* FRED *and shakes hands. He sees* JULIA *and* JULIA *sees him. She lowers her head*) This is my nephew Capt. Crosby, who is stationed at Fort Monroe.

CAPTAIN. I beg your pardon, this young lady? (*Indicates* JULIA.)

JULIA. Is Miss Bonds' maid.

JULIA *turns up* R. FRED *joins her.*)

CAPTAIN. (*aside*) Jove, but she's pretty.

CAPTAIN. (R. C., *to* TILLIE) Do you intend to remain here, Miss Bonds?

TILLIE. (C.) Really, I don't know.

CLINGSTONE. It depends on your brother I suppose.

TILLIE. My brother! Yes, of course it depends on—my brother.

CAPTAIN. I know San Francisco very well. I spent two months there last winter.

TILLIE. You don't say.

JULIA. (*apart to* FRED) And she was never there.

CAPTAIN. The people are very charming and hospitable, but the city itself is too (*making undulating motion with hand*) undulating. Don't you think so?

(FRED *crosses* L. *back of* CAPTAIN *and* TILLIE.)

TILLIE. Altogether too (*imitates* CAPTAIN'S *motion*) too—what did you say?

CAPTAIN. Too undulating. (TILLIE *stands confused*)

FRED. Too hilly.

TILLIE. Oh, yes. I didn't quite catch the word.

(*Enter* FRONT *from elevator* R. U.)

FRONT. (*to* CLINGSTONE) The lady in 137 wants to see you, sir, and she says take Captain Crosby up as well. (*exit* FRONT *to office* L. U.)

CLINGSTONE. (L.) That is my sister.

FRED. (L. C.) The one of whom you spoke.

CLINGSTONE. Yes, so please excuse me. Are you coming, Ralph?

CAPTAIN. I have not seen my aunt for several days, so if you will pardon me for the present. (*bowing*) Thank you.

(FRED *pulls* TILLIE'S *dress and she courtesys.* CLINGSTONE *exits to elevator followed by the* CAPTAIN *who looks again at* JULIA *and shows she has attracted him.* JULIA *drop down* R. C. *after* CLINGSTONE *and* CAPTAIN *pass her.*)

FRED. (L *to* JULIA) What does all this mean?

JULIA. (*crosses to* FRED) It means that during our short stay here I am going to discover how attractive I should be without my money, for Tillie is going to be the heiress and I the maid.

FRED. (L. C.) But, my dear girl.

JULIA. (C. L.) It's too late to argue now. The thing is done. Can you play the lady, Tillie?

TILLIE. (R. C.) Can I? Well, I should smile.

JULIA. Then go to the rooms, help yourself to the prettiest gown I have, and when we see you again you will be Miss Bonds, the heiress.

(*Exit* TILLIE *to elevator* R. U.)

FRED. I don't like this at all. You'll be held responsible for everything that girl does and she's only been with you a week.

JULIA. But she came with the best of references.

FRED. From people you don't know. This has gone far enough, Julia, and has got to end right here.

JULIA. But what would Mr. Clingstone think—and Captain Crosby, what would he say?

FRED. What would your friends say?

JULIA. They'll never know about it.

FRED. And Uncle Seymour, if it ever got to his ears——!

JULIA. What is the use of worrying about Uncle Seymour when we are here and he is in San Francisco. (*goes* R. C.)

SITES. (*outside* L. U., *in office*) Eight dollars a day! Eight dollars a day! I'll pay two dollars and a half a day and not a cent more.

FRED. Heavens and earth! Isn't that his voice?

JULIA. (*crosses up* R. C. *one half.* FRED *crosses up* C. *one half*) It can't be.

SITES. ( *in office* L. U.) Yes, sir. Two dollars

and a half a day. And I want a good outside room, first floor, east front, with a bath.

FRED. Yes, that's uncle. Nobody but him could be as reasonable as that.

(*Sound of gong in office. Voice calls "*FRONT, *show this gentleman to room thirteen."*)

(FRONT *enters from office with grips* L. U. JULIA *crosses down* R. FRED *crosses down* L. C.)

SITES. (*in office*). Front.

FRONT. (*stopping up* L. U.) Yes sir.

SITES. (*in office*) See that the room's well aired and that there's an extra supply of matches and towels.

FRONT. (*starting* R.) Yes sir.

SITES. (*in office*) And Front!

FRONT. (*stopping*) Yes sir.

SITES. (*in office*) Take up a pitcher of ice water and writing materials, immediately.

FRONT. (*starting*) Yes sir.

SITES. (*in office*) And Front.

FRONT. (*stopping*) Yes sir.

SITES. (*in office*) If the party in the next room has a piano have it moved. I can't stand the noise.

FRONT. Yes sir! Yes sir! Of course, sir.

(*Exit* FRONT *to elevator* R. U.)

SITES. (*crosses* C. *at back, entering from office* L. U.) If a man has got to pay for these luxuries he might as well have 'em whether he wants 'em or not.

(SITES *is forty years old. His hair is parted on the side and brushed straight across. His side whiskers are brushed close down to his cheeks.*

*Entire make-up and costume to indicate the stern business man about whom there is no frivolity.*)

JULIA *and* FRED. (*timorously—down stage* R.) Uncle!

SITES. (C., *rubbing his eyes as if in doubt*) Are you at Old Point Comfort or am I at Cape May?

JULIA *and* FRED. We—are at—Old Point Comfort.

SITES. Well, if this place can keep up its present gait I'm due for an exciting time. First the clerk wanted to charge me eight dollars a day and now, I meet you.

FRED. (*hesitating*) Well, it was this way. Julia thought——!

JULIA. Yes, uncle, Fred imagined——

(JULIA *and* FRED *gaze at each other discomfited.*)

SITES. Haven't got your story straight, have you. But whatever it was, you didn't think it necessary to get my consent.

FRED. I intended writing you from here.

SITES. Ah! Then you need money.

FRED. Need money! No, indeed! The very idea!

JULIA. Of course not. We've been quite economical.

SITES. You have, eh? What room have you got?

JULIA. I—I have suite "A", uncle.

SITES. Suite "A", uncle (*to* FRED) And you——

FRED. I have parlor B.

SITES. Suite A. Parlor B. That's your idea of economy, is it? How much a minute do they charge you?

FRED. Really, sir, I didn't inquire.

SITES. Why should you? Money's no object to you. But understand me, once for all, I made you a liberal allowance for this trip and I won't advance another dollar—not a dollar.

FRED. We don't expect it. Do we, Julia?

JULIA. No, indeed.

SITES. Then you won't be disappointed.

FRED. But, uncle, what brings you here?

SITES. Business! Business! The thing that has monopolized my attention for the past twenty-one years. I'm not here on any butterfly errand, I am a bee, sir! A busy bee!

FRED. I thought perhaps you had come here for your health.

SITES. My health! Look at that eye! Feel that muscle! Look at the whole man, sir, the whole man. Health indeed! I've got health for sale.

JULIA. It must be rather funny business to bring you here.

SITES. You may think it funny. I don't. It compelled me to leave my office for the first time in twenty-one years, to be bumped in the cars all day like corn in a popper, and to have my nights made miserable by a patriotic Englishman who persisted in snoring "God save the Queen."

FRED. That was really too bad.

SITES. And to fill my cup of misery to the brim he was way off the key. However, I shall make five thousand dollars by the trip, so I suppose I ought not to complain. Well! Well! Why don't you ask me about it? You're dying of impatience, you know you are.

JULIA. (*indifferently*) Of course, uncle I——! (*goes* R.)

FRED. (*indifferently*) Yes sir, I'm sure——!

SITES. (*sits* L., JULIA R., FRED *on sofa* L.) Then

I'll tell you, since you insist. You remember my cashier?

FRED. Yes, Bailey.

SITES. I never thought he'd make me come on a journey like this.

FRED. Why didn't you send him?

SITES. How could I, when he decamped.

FRED *and* JULIA. Decamped?

SITES. With fifty thousand dollars of my money.

JULIA. This is news.

FRED. *How* did he take it?

SITES. Suddenly—and in one large allopathic dose. It was a forgery and so nearly perfect it almost deceived me. Oh, the ingratitude of that man. Fifteen years ago he came to me and begged me with tears in his voice to give him work for the sake of his wife and eight small, starving children.

JULIA. And you listened to his pleadings?

SITES. Yes. Let him keep my books. (*emphatically*) Paid him seven dollars a week! Two for himself, one for his wife, and fifty cents for each small, starving child.

FRED. Munificent.

SITES. I advanced him step by step, raising his salary as his responsibilities increased. After letting him work for me for fifteen years I made him cashier—jumped him from ten and a half to twelve dollars a week. And how did he repay me? By forging my name for fifty thousand dollars and getting away with the money.

FRED. Has it been in the papers?

SITES. Of course not. Do you suppose I want to advertise the fact that my twelve dollar a week clerk was a smarter man than I was? As soon as I discovered the forgery I placed the case in the hands of a detective agency, and offered five thousand dollars reward for his conviction. And guess what they

did? But you couldn't. You simply couldn't! They put a woman on his track. A woman to catch a man clever enough to rob me.

JULIA. But, uncle, what is the connecting link between Bailey and Old Point Comfort?

SITES. A letter I received from a friend of mine —one on whom I can rely. He wrote, "Your cashier is having a vacation I see. He is at present here but I heard him say he intended spending the coming week at Old Point Comfort." That was enough for me so here I am to capture Bailey, save my five thousand dollars and give those wonderful detectives the royal Ha! Ha!

FRED. But the arrival of a multimillionaire like you is sure to be chronicled in the papers. Bailey will see it and keep away.

SITES. But the papers won't get it. I am too subtle for that. (*rises to* C.) The name of Seymour Sites isn't on that register out there.

JULIA. (*rises, goes* R. C.) I understand. You've changed your name.

SITES. Exactly. For this occasion and this occasion only, I am Mr. Wright.

FRED. Mr. Wright. (*rises*)

SITES. Right.

JULIA. And we are not to recognize you as our Uncle Seymour Sites?

SITES. Quite right. While here we are strangers. (*crosses up* C.)

JULIA. (*crosses* L. *to* FRED.) Splendid.

SITES. (*turns* C. *one half*) What's that?

JULIA. (*turns*) I referred to the fun—the mystery.

SITES. (*crosses up* C.) Oh!

JULIA. (*apart to* FRED) This suits me exactly. (*aloud*) And now, (*goes* C. L.) my dear Mr. Wright,

if you have no other forgeries or incognitos to tell me about, I'll go and dress for dinner.

SITES. (C. *one half*) That's all.

(JULIA *exits to elevator.* SITES *sets on sofa* L.

FRED. (C.) And so Bailey is a thief.

SITES. Who said so? You ought to study the lexicography of crime young man. Bailey is not a thief. He took fifty thousand dollars—and is a defaulter. Had he made it five hundred thousand he would have been a financier.

FRED. Why, I'd quite forgotten. Your old friend Mr. Clingstone is here.

SITES. Wayland Clingstone; well, well.

FRED. He's sure to recognize you.

SITES. He mightn't. I haven't seen him for ten years. But even if he does remember me, I can explain matters and everything will be all right.

FRED. (*mysteriously*) But his sister is here as well.

SITES. His sister! Which one?

FRED. *The* one.

SITES. Then you know?

FRED. I do.

SITES. Is she married or—unappropriated?

FRED. Can't say.

SITES. Have you seen her?

FRED. No.

SITES. Ah! She was a picture she was—a face like an angel, and a figure like Diana. They don't build 'em like her nowadays.

FRED. But can you trust her?

SITES. Of course not. (*rising*) She's a woman. (*crosses to* C., FRED *to* L. C.)

FRED. That makes things awkward.

SITES. Very awkward. There's only one way out of it that I can see.

FRED. (L. C.) And that is?

SITES. (C.) Carry my incog through and pretend not to know them.

FRED. You'll have to make the denial very emphatic to do that.

SITES. And can't I be emphatic when I want to?

FRED. (*meaningly*) Yes, indeed. I've heard you.

SITES. (*to* C. L.) Well, if Clingstone ever claims acquaintance with me—just watch my smoke.

(*Enter* CLINGSTONE *from elevator* R. U.)

CLINGSTONE. (*crosses down* R. C.) Why, my dear Seymour.

FRED. (*goes* L. *Apart to* SITES) There he is now.

(SITES *winks knowingly at* FRED.)

CLINGSTONE. (R. C.) I'm so glad to see you.

SITES. (C.) Excuse me! You are making a slight mistake. The man you are looking for has just gone into the office, so pass right along—pass right along—(*turns up* L. C. *and shakes coat tails*)

CLINGSTONE. The man I am looking for?

SITES. (*coming* L. C.) Yes, Mr. Hayseed Wayback from Cassopolis, Kansas, who came here with a carpet-sack in one hand and an itch for experience in the other. He may want a gold brick, I don't. (*goes* L. C., *winks at* FRED)

CLINGSTONE. (R. C., *half aside*) Gold brick! He takes me for a confidence man. (*aloud*) My dear sir, you are sadly in error.

SITES. (*to* C.) Then perhaps you want to show me where the tunnel has caved in, or play a little

game of three card monte—or guess the shell it is under and so take the money. Whichever it is you've got the wrong party so pass right along, pass right along. (*goes up* L. C. *again, winking at* FRED *and repeating business with coat*)

CLINGSTONE. But don't you remember me, your old friend, Wayland Clingstone?

SITES. (*coming down* L. C.) Yes, I do remember you, my old friend, but not by any such name as that—Hungry Joe.

CLINGSTONE. Hungry Joe!

SITES. You remember what the Judge said, "Seven years sure if you are ever caught again."

CLINGSTONE. But, really, I don't understand. I thought you were my old college chum, Seymour Sites.

SITES. "His old college chum." Now, see here, Charlie Jones, alias Parson Pete, alias Hungry Joe, say two words more and I'll leave this little matter I'm detailed on here and take you in charge myself.

CLINGSTONE. You will do nothing of the kind, sir. I would have you understand that I am no Parson Peter nor Hungry Joseph. I am a reputable citizen, sir, and this young man can vouch for me.

SITES. He can, eh? (*to* FRED) How long have you known this whited sepulchre—this wolf in sheep's clothing?

FRED. Since this morning.

SITES. He came and introduced himself to you, called you by name.

FRED. Yes.

SITES. Said he was an old friend of your father's or perhaps knew your uncle.

FRED. You must have *heard* him.

SITES. Heard him? That's his regular game.

CLINGSTONE. (R. C.) But I protest!

SITES. Shut up! (*crosses to him then returns to*

FRED) You've had a lucky escape. Before morning he'd have had all your loose cash, your watch and chain and a note for seven thousand dollars. (*crosses to* CLINGSTONE) Who is working this lay with you? Some woman I suppose. (*to* FRED) Has any woman called you by name to-day and asked about your uncle?

FRED. Not yet.

SITES. Then mark my words, one will before very long. (*to* CLINGSTONE) As for you, my clerical looking Confidence King, I haven't quite made up my mind what I will do with you.

(SITES *crosses up stage* L. C., *one half*. FRED *down stage* L., CLINGSTONE R. C.)

(*Enter* ARABELLA *from elevator* R. U. *She is about forty-five years old and matronly of appearance.*)

ARABELLA. (*crossing* L. *to* FRED) My dear Mr. Bonds. How delighted I am to see you.

SITES. (*gets* C. *one half. Aside, surprised*) It isn't possible. It can't be

ARABELLA. (L. C.) My brother told me about meeting you. How is your Uncle Seymour?

SITES. (*aside*) It is. And to think she drove me into the wholesale liquor business. (*crosses* C.)

CLINGSTONE. (R.) Arabella!

ARABELLA. What is it, Wayland. (*sees* SITES, *screams with delight. Crosses to him*) What a delightful surprise.

SITES. Excuse me, madam; excuse me.

ARABELLA. But, surely, despite these years, my dear Mr. Sites——!

SITES. Excuse me again. I am not your dear, and I am not Mr. Sites.

ARABELLA. Oh, but you can't deceive me.

SITES. I wouldn't have the nerve to try.

ARABELLA. Would you believe it. I know you'll think it exceedingly strange. But I am Arabella Clingstone still. (*turns to* FRED *for his approval*)

SITES. (C., *aside*) I was her last chance and she lost me.

ARABELLA. When we had our final interview I was only a foolish girl.

SITES. And I, of course, was your old college chum. Anybody can see through this little game.

ARABELLA. Game! Believe me, Mr. Sites, I am not in sport in recalling those happy days. (*advances toward* SITES *with outstretched hands*)

SITES. (*retreating, crosses to* FRED. ARABELLA *goes* C.) Don't you dare lay a finger on me. (*to* FRED) I call on you to witness I have made no advances.

ARABELLA. Advances?

SITES. Yes. I never set eyes on you till a moment ago. I am no student of archæology, and have no interest whatever in your dim distant past.

ARABELLA. Sir! How dare you.

SITES. To tell the truth I don't know.

CLINGSTONE. You are laboring under a misapprehension, my dear. This—this gentleman—is not Mr. Sites. He is a detective or something of that kind.

SITES. And my name is Wright.

ARABELLA. (*to* FRED) And this isn't your Uncle Seymour?

FRED. No. Oh no. Uncle is still in San Francisco.

ARABELLA. (*to* SITES) What a mortifying mistake. (*to* CLINGSTONE) And to think I nearly kissed him. (*bus. for* SITES)

CLINGSTONE. We have both been misled, Arabella. (*crossing with* ARABELLA *to* L. 2) This "gentle-

man's" behavior towards me made me doubt that he is Mr. Sites, his conduct toward you convinces me that he is not. Let us go, my dear. Let us go without further parley. (*as* ARABELLA *and* CLINGSTONE *cross,* SITES *and* FRED *laugh silently. At exit* CLINGSTONE *turns with horrified expression and upraised hands.* SITES *and* FRED *straighten faces*)

(*Exeunt* ARABELLA *and* CLINGSTONE L. 2.)

SITES. (*to* C., *laughing*) Was that emphatic enough?

FRED. (L. C.) I should say it was. But, uncle, they don't build 'em like her nowadays.

SITES. Get away! Get away! But, Fred, I've made a discovery.

FRED. What is it?

SITES. The lucky man is the one who doesn't get what he is sure he wants.

(*Enter* FRONT *from elevator. Drop down* R. C.)

FRONT. I took up all the things, sir.

SITES. All right.

FRONT. (*scratches hand*) And the party in the next room has no piano.

SITES. Good.

FRONT. (*rattles change in pocket*) Have your shoes polished, sir?

SITES. No. (*goes* L.)

FRONT. Anything else I can do for you, sir?

SITES. (*apart to* FRED) He wants a tip. (*emphatically and directly to* FRONT) Not a thing.

FRONT. (*aside*) He can't throw me down like that. (*goes up* R. C. *one half*)

SITES. (*to* FRED) Meet me here in about fifteen minutes. I want to get rid of a little of the dust I accumulated on my journey.

FRED. Very well, uncle. Meanwhile I'll see if any mail came from San Francisco for me on the late boat.

SITES. (*going to elevator*) All right, Fred, all right.

FRONT. Didn't you forget something, sir?

SITES. If I did, and if you find it, bring it to my room and I'll divide it with you.

(*Exit* SITES *to elevator. Exit* FRED *laughing to office,* L. U.)

FRONT. Well, that fellow's a wonder. That's what he is. He's a wonder.

(*Exit* FRONT *to office,* L. U.)

(*Enter* CAPTAIN *and* TILLIE *from verandah* C. *from* R.)

TILLIE. (*crosses down* L. *of* TILLIE, *sits*) I thought Old Point Comfort was such a gay place.

CAPTAIN. (*back of* TILLIE) During the season. But it's a little early yet.

TILLIE. Ain't there any swell people here?

CAPTAIN. Rich ones galore, a senator or two, Lord Brazenface——!

TILLIE. A Lord! A real live Lord! Gee! How I'd like to see him.

CAPTAIN. I'll introduce him at the first opportunity. (*crosses* R. *of* TILLIE, *sits*)

TILLIE. You will. (*aside*) To think I'm going to meet a Lord.

CAPTAIN. You'll attend the dances of course.

TILLIE. Do they have dances here?

CAPTAIN. Frequently. There's one to-night. May I act as your escort?

TILLIE. You bet. At dances is right where I live.

(*Enter* LORD BRAZENFACE *from office. He is about twenty-eight years old, his hair is parted in the middle and brushed flat; he wears a checked suit and a small cap. In his eye is a monocle and he carries a cane. He is a typical degenerate lordling; short of stature and apparently invertebrate; he is absolutely imperturbable and unabashable. Care must be taken not to overdo this role either in makeup or action. He goes to water cooler as though to pour out a drink.*)

CAPTAIN. There's Lord Brazenface. Shall I present him now?

TILLIE. (*rises, crosses* L. C.) Yes, do. Ain't he cute.

CAPTAIN. (*rises, crosses* C. R. *one half*) Brazenface!

LORD B. Hello, Crosby, old chap.

CAPTAIN. Let me present you to Miss Bonds of San Francisco.

LORD B. Charmed, I'm sure. First day here?

TILLIE. Yes. Came this afternoon.

LORD B. Sorry for you. It's the beastliest, slowest, beastliest place I ever was in.

TILLIE. Just what I was saying.

LORD B. If things don't brighten up, I'm going to skip. Can't stand being dull. It weakens my constitution.

CAPTAIN. Why don't you do something to enliven the place?

LORD B. Can't do it all alone, and can't find anyone to go in with me.

TILLIE. I'll go in with you on anything you please.

LORD B. That's very good. Let's start with the dance to-night.

TILLIE. Can't. I've promised to go with the Captain.

LORD B. That doesn't make any difference. He'll withdraw. Won't you, Crosby?

CAPTAIN. Not unless Miss Bonds particularly desires it.

LORD B. But she does. She does. Don't you, Miss Bonds?

TILLIE. That wouldn't hardly be fair.

LORD B. (*to* CROSBY) There, you see. You see? Now come, old chap, don't be selfish.

CAPTAIN. I leave the matter entirely with Miss Bonds.

TILLIE. Then I tell you what we'll do. I'll go with Captain Crosby to-night, and after to-night I'll go with you (BRAZENFACE) as often as you please.

LORD B. That's very good. Really you are the jolliest girl I ever met. (*close to her*)

TILLIE. Why shouldn't I be to the cunningest little lord I ever met.

(*Looking in each other's eyes.*)

LORD B. Call me Brazey, all my friends do.

TILLIE. I'm willing, Brazey.

LORD B. You're so free and easy and all that sort of thing you know.

CAPTAIN. (*go* R. C., *aside*) So different from that ladylike maid.

TILLIE. I may be free and easy and all that sort of thing, you know. But don't you make any mistake, Brazey. I can draw the line in the proper place for I know just how far a girl should go.

LORD B. That's very good. I wish we had girls like you in London.

TILLIE. I'm coming over to poky old London some day, and when I land you'll see the other end of that country trip up.

LORD B. You've never been to England then?

TILLIE. No. Shan't go abroad till I have saw everything in this country.

LORD B. That's very good.

CAPTAIN. (*aside*) "Have saw" shades of Lindey Murray.

TILLIE. (*crosses* C. *one half.* BRAZENFACE *goes* L. C.) Well, by-by. See you both at the dance to-night.

CAPTAIN *and* LORD B. Yes. See you to-night.

(*Exit* TILLIE *to elevator* R.)

LORD B. That girl's a dream, Crosby. That's what she is. A dream.

(LORD B. *and* CROSBY *sit* R.)

CAPTAIN. Rich too.

LORD B. Really! How much?

CAPTAIN. Oh! A million or so.

LORD B. Well, rich or poor she's a charmer. Do you know I expected to meet a good many more just like her when I came to this country. I'm disappointed in your girls, Crosby, I am, really.

CAPTAIN. Then perhaps you are glad I did not take the bet you offered the day you arrived here.

LORD B. Glad! Well, hardly.

CAPTAIN. You still think you could win it?

(*Enter* FRED *from office reading a letter. Crosses down* L. C.)

LORD B. Of course I do.

CAPTAIN. (*rises*) There's Miss Bonds' brother. I'll introduce him.

LORD B. Do, old chap. If he's anything like his sister, he's a jolly good fellow.

CAPTAIN. Mr. Bonds. (FRED *crosses* C.) Let me introduce Lord Brazenface. Brazenface, this is Mr. Bonds.

LORD B. (*rises*) How de do! Now, Crosby, we'll see what Mr. Bonds thinks about it. (*to* FRED) I have offered to wager that I could kiss any lady in this house with her consent in twenty-four hours.

FRED. And my opinion is that you'd lose the bet by a lifetime.

LORD B. I'm willing to make it just the same. Anything up to two hundred pounds. Do you want a part of it?

FRED. No, indeed. It's not a betting matter. (*crosses* R. C.)

LORD B. (C.) Then you, Captain?—Come now, just to be sociable.

CAPTAIN. I agree with Mr. Bonds.

(CAPTAIN *and* FRED *down stage* R., *giving* LORD B. *the cold shoulder. He takes absolutely no notice of it.*)

LORD B. You are altogether too squeamish. But I'm going through with this now for my own satisfaction. I'll tell you what I'll do. If I don't kiss the fortunate lady in the stipulated time, I'll give you two the finest champagne supper to be had in the house.

CAPTAIN. No, Brazenface. No, I can't agree to it.

FRED. Nor I.

LORD B. Oh yes, you can. Of course you can. We'll make the selection the usual way, by chance. Now, what method would be perfectly fair. I have it. The happy recipient of my chaste salute, shall be the first member of the gentler sex to enter this parlor.

CAPTAIN. Then the first lady who enters here——

LORD B. I kiss in twenty-four hours or forfeit the champagne supper. Gad! I hope she's handsome.

(*Enter* ARABELLA *and* CLINGSTONE L. 2.)

ARABELLA. (*decided*) I never heard of such a thing.

(*Consternation og* BRAZENFACE *who goes to cooler and takes a drink. Amusement of* FRED *and perplexity of* CROSBY.)

ARABELLA. (L. C.) To think that dreadful person should take you for a confidence man and me for your accomplice. I leave here this very day. (*going to elevator*)

CLINGSTONE. (*going to elevator*) Do not be rash, my dear. Do nothing in the heat of your indignation.

(*Exeunt* ARABELLA *and* CLINGSTONE *to elevator.*)

LORD B. (*crosses down* L. C.) Bet's off.

FRED. (*to* C.) Gad, I hope she's handsome.

LORD B. Whatever may be said against the Brazenfaces no one has been able to deny that they were sportsmen, and as a sportsman I decline to take advantage of a sure thing.

CAPTAIN. (*to* R. C.) But hang it all, Brazenface. That lady is my aunt.

LORD B. Lucky fellow. You're not a bit like her.

CAPTAIN. Of course this can go no further.

LORD B. Of course not, for your sake—and mine. We'll scratch the aunt, that's what we'll do, we'll scratch the aunt and put the money on the next new comer.

FRED. You insist on your plan then?

LORD B. Certainly. And here's hoping for better luck next time. (*all move slightly* R.)

(*Sounds of wheels* L. *Clerk's gong rings, voice calls "*FRONT*".* FRONT *enters from office exit* L. 2.)

LORD B. The ladies' entrance! Now to know my fate.

(*Enter* FRONT *and exit to office* L. 3, *followed by* HENRIETTA. *She is a handsome, dashing woman of about thirty and is dressed in a fashionable traveling costume. She makes her entrance briskly and in a businesslike way.*)

LORD B. (C.) Did you see her! I say, did you see her? She's a charmer. Watch me now. Just watch me. (*goes up* C. *one half*)

CAPTAIN. Would you speak without an introduction?

LORD B. Would I? Just watch me. (L. 3) Stand back there (*they cross* L. C.) and take a lesson in the art.

(*Re-enter* HENRIETTA L. 3.)

LORD B. (*up* C. *one half. To* HENRIETTA) How do you do? So pleased to see you—again. We've met before. I know we have. Where was it? Oh yes, I remember now. It was at the dog show.

HENRIETTA. Perhaps I did see you. I was there. What kennel were you in?

(HENRIETTA *goes* R. *down and takes off gloves.* FRED *and* CAPTAIN L. C., *laughing.*)

LORD B. (*to* FRED *and* CAPTAIN) Not bad that, eh? Not half bad.

FRED. Now we will take the supper.

CAPTAIN. You'll never renew the attack after a defeat like that.

LORD B. Defeat! That's simply a repulse along the skirmish line. Let's go and reconnoitre in the office. Then I'll return and renew the siege alone. Gad, I am a killer.

(*Exeunt* LORD B., CROSBY *and* FRED *to office* L. 3.)

HENRIETTA. (*alone*) I wonder if my man is really here. A fifty thousand dollar forgery with a five thousand dollar reward doesn't come my way every day. The chief must have got some pretty straight information or he would never have wired me to come here.

(*Enter* CLEWS. *He is a plain clothes' detective.*)

CLEWS. (C.) Miss Oliver.

HENRIETTA. (R. C.) Clews.

CLEWS. The chief sent me with this letter of instructions for you, and told me to place myself under your orders. (*gives letter*)

HENRIETTA. Very good. Are you staying here?

CLEWS. Yes.

HENRIETTA. Well, we'd better not be seen too much together. I'll let you know when I need you.

CLEWS. Very well. I'll be ready for business any time you are.

(*Exit* CLEWS *to office.*)

HENRIETTA. (*sits* L., *opens letter, reads*) "Regarding the Seymour Sites' case you have in hand. I have just received information that Bailey the forger, is headed for Old Point Comfort. Bailey is spending money lavishly and has assumed the name of Mr. Wright;" Mr. Wright! I must remember that.

(*Reads.*)

"the forgery is so perfect that a confession is es-

sential to conviction and as the reward depends on that I leave it to your woman's wit to secure the desired confession." Well, Mr. Bailey, alias Wright, I know where you will go if you show up in these parts, and I also know where Mr. Sites' five thousand dollars will go, for no criminal, that is, no male criminal, has ever escaped me.

(*Enter* LORD B. *from office.*)

LORD B. (*crosses down* C.) Here I am—back again.

HENRIETTA. (*turns in chair, faces him*) I've had a little experience in my time, but for cool, consummate, unadulterated impudence, you are the head of the class.

LORD B. That's very good—Miss Oliver! You see, we have met, I recalled your name the minute I stepped into the office. Funny, wasn't it.

HENRIETTA. Remarkably! Especially as the register is there.

LORD B. You're bright. By Jove you are.

HENRIETTA. Since you know my name do you mind favoring me with yours?

LORD B. I am Lord Brazenface. My friends call me Brazey.

HENRIETTA. The imported article. That accounts for it. I thought our infant industries couldn't have produced anything quite equal to you. (*rises*)

(*Enter* SITES, *from elevator, crosses at back to* L. C.)

LORD B. Don't despair. Americans are clever. They'll equal us in time. (SITES *overhearing, stops*) And now will you honor me with your society at the dance this evening. I deferred asking anyone else, as I was waiting for you. Fact, I assure you!

HENRIETTA. We might as well end this farce right now. I never set eyes on you before. (*back turned down* L. C.)

LORD B. Of course you didn't. But what does that matter? We are both here, alone. (*sits* L.) Come and sit down—won't you sit down? I like you—do sit down. Let's be friends and be happy.

HENRIETTA. I like you too—at a distance. So oblige me by staying there.

(HENRIETTA *starts to elevator, crosses up* R. C. *one half.*)

LORD B. (*following up* C.) Ah, but you can't get away like that.

SITES. (*interposing*) Say one more word to this lady (HENRIETTA *stops*) and I'll give you such a lesson in politeness that you'll need an introduction to your looking glass.

LORD B. (*aside, goes down* L. C.) Isn't the old man cocky. (*aloud*) My dear sir, rather than quarrel with you I'll give up the dearest friend I have in the world. (*kissing hand*) Au revoir, Henrietta. See you again soon. Au revoir. I am a killer.

(*Exit* LORD B. R. 2.)

HENRIETTA. I don't know how to express my gratitude.

SITES. There's no need for you to try.

HENRIETTA. (*crosses down* L. C. *Aside*) I've got to get acquainted in this place and might as well begin now. (*aloud*) But am I not to know to whom I am indebted for this courtesy?

SITES. (C.) My name is not at all essential. So, good-afternoon. (*starts up* C. *to* L.)

HENRIETTA. (L. C.) But, sir, such a favor from

an entire stranger is so refreshing that you must pardon me if I persist in asking the name of the gentleman I shall always hold in such grateful remembrance.

SITES. (C.) I can't see how my name can possibly be of service to you. (*starts up* C.)

HENRIETTA. (*aside*) What is he afraid of. (*aloud*) Please don't mar the most pleasurable episode of my life by leaving it incomplete. Your name —please.

SITES. (*handing card*) If you must know——

HENRIETTA. (*reading card*) "Mr. Seymour Sites."

SITES. No. That's a mistake—It isn't my name at all. I used to work for Mr. Sites and so happen to have his card. My name is Wright.

HENRIETTA. (*aside*) My man! This is just like finding five thousand dollars. (*to* SITES) You must excuse me, Mr. Wright, if I say that a happy incident like this comes to a woman such as I am only once in a lifetime. It will be worth a great deal to me.

SITES. Will it?

HENRIETTA. Yes. Much more than you may imagine—now. Though the day may come when you will understand it in all its deep significance.

(SITES *regards* HENRIETTA *an instant with awakening interest. Then his expression changes to one of mistrust and suspicion. He turns abruptly.*)

SITES. Good afternoon. (*starts up* C.)

HENRIETTA. But, Mr. Wright. (SITES *pays no attention*) Mr. Wright! (SITES *stops suddenly, as though just remembering his assumed name.* HENRIETTA *notices it and smiles significantly*) I have

no desire to have you at a disadvantage. As you did not ask my name I suppose I must volunteer the information. (HENRIETTA *hands card to* SITES)

SITES. (*reading card*) "Henrietta Oliver, Milliner!"

HENRIETTA. You don't think any the worse of me for being a milliner, do you, Mr. Wright?

SITES. Certainly not. Certainly not.

HENRIETTA. A woman who is thrown on her own resources must do something—especially if she is all alone in the world.

SITES. That's too bad. (*goes* R. C., *aside*) She's pretty, too.

HENRIETTA. (*to* C.) I thought of moving to San Francisco, but they tell me it is such a wicked city.

SITES. You'd get along there all right.

HENRIETTA. (*looking archly at* SITES) Think so?

(SITES *catches the glance and stands in doubt as to whether to reciprocate or not.*)

HENRIETTA. Do you really think so?

SITES. (*warmly*) I'd back you with my bottom dollar. (*in alarm*) No! No, I wouldn't! No, I wouldn't.

HENRIETTA. I'd not ask that of anyone, especially a stranger. All I should need would be the advice of a man of sound judgment and ripe experience.

SITES. And you'd find lots of them ready to give it to you.

HENRIETTA. But there are so few men deserving of a woman's confidence. Now, my intuition tells me that I could trust you.

SITES. The trouble would be that I couldn't trust myself.

(*Enter* FRONT, *from office with telegram and blanks.* HENRIETTA *watches.*)

FRONT. Telegram for you, sir.

SITES. (*opening telegram—reads*) "Your presence here imperatively necessary. Come home immediately. Business demands it." Things are going to rack and ruin. I knew it. I knew it.

FRONT. Any answer, sir?

SITES. You bet there is. (*taking reply blank from* FRONT) Go tell the clerk to have my trunk brought down at once. I leave on the next train. Then come back for this. (*the reply*)

*Crosses* STAGE

FRONT. All right, sir.

(*Exit* FRONT *to office.* SITES *sits* R., *writing.*)

HENRIETTA. (C. L. *Aside*) He's going away. I must prevent that. (*aloud*) May I speak to you a moment, Mr. Wright?

SITES. You'll have to excuse me now, madam. I have business to attend to. (*writes*)

HENRIETTA. But this is a very simple matter. (SITES *still writing*) I said this is a very simple matter. (SITES *blots telegram and places it on desk*)

SITES. Well, what is?

HENRIETTA. Simply a woman's question. Is my hat on straight.

SITES. Your hat on—(*aside*) the nerve. (*Aloud*) Giving an answer without resorting to a square and spirit level, I should say it is.

HENRIETTA. Thank you. (*putting her hands to hat*) Why, it isn't anything of the kind. (*arranging hat and withdrawing long hat-pin*) That's more like it. And now will you kindly pin it for me. (*offering hat-pin*)

SITES. (*rises, looking at hat-pin*) You ought to be arrested for carrying concealed weapons.

HENRIETTA. How foolish. It's only a hat-pin.

SITES. (*taking pin and handling it awkwardly*) But I never pinned a woman's hat in my life.

HENRIETTA. Then it's time you began. Come.

(SITES, *with extreme awkwardness, sticks pin in front of the hat.*)

HENRIETTA. (C. L.) Not there. At the back.

SITES. (C.) Of course. (SITES *withdraws pin and pushes it about half way into back of the hat*) How's that, eh? How's that?

HENRIETTA. (*putting hand to hat and finding protruding pin*) That won't do at all. Push it right through.

SITES. Not unless you want to play the star part at a coroner's inquest.

HENRIETTA. I'm not afraid.

SITES. Then here goes. (SITES *pushes pin violently into hat.* HENRIETTA *screams as if hurt*)

SITES. Did it hurt you? Why, you're not going to faint, are you?

HENRIETTA. (*aside. A good idea. Aloud*) Yes. —yes, I think I am.

SITES. But think of me. (HENRIETTA *sits on sofa and pretends to faint*) She has! What had I better do? Rub her hands? (*Reaches for her hand, she places it on arm of sofa. He draws back—in apprehension. Sees tankard of water* C.—*fetches it and raises it as if to dash it in* HENRIETTA'S *face. She has been watching, so heaves a sigh and opens her eyes.* SITES *places tankard on the floor*)

SITES. (*down* C. L.) Do you feel better?

HENRIETTA. Yes. It was the heat, the fatigue of the journey. Sit down here and rub my hand, please.

(SITES *hesitatingly sits beside her. She places her hand in his. Still apprehensive he looks about, then rubs hand slowly at first, but gradually increasing speed and ardor.*)

(FRONT *re-enters, goes to table, picks up* SITES' *reply.*)

HENRIETTA. That's so nice.

FRONT. (R. C., *reading and going to office*) Don't do a thing till I return. Shall leave on next train."

HENRIETTA. What, are you going away, Mr. Wright, dear Mr. Wright?

SITES. (*rises*) Going. Well, I should say not.

(*Takes telegram from* FRONT, *goes to desk and writes another.*)

"Won't be home for seven months. Am living for the first time in twenty-one years."

(SITES *gives reply to* FRONT. *He exits to office* L. U. SITES *crosses quickly to* HENRIETTA *and raises her hand to his lips.*)

QUICK CURTAIN

## ACT II

SCENE:—*Same as* ACT I.

TIME: Next morning.

DISCOVERED:—FRED *and* JULIA.

JULIA. (*reading magazine*) But, suppose uncle won't give us the money?

FRED. (*seated writing a letter*) He'll have to, or else——!

JULIA. That's it, or else what?

FRED. (*sealing letter*) Don't let that worry you. We'll get it some way. In the meantime each of us must look for a favorable opportunity of wheedling it out of him.

(FRONT *enters from office* L. 3, *carrying a magnificent bouquet. Is crossing to elevator, gets* C. *one half.*)

JULIA. What a superb bouquet.

FRONT. (*crosses down* C.) Yes, Miss. It's for Miss Oliver, the lady in sixty-eight. This makes the third bunch she's had this morning.

FRED. She has friends here, then?

FRONT. One anyway, sir. They're all from the same gent.

FRED. Really.

FRONT. Yes, sir. It's that friend of yours, Mr. Wright.

FRED *and* JULIA. (FRED *rises with letter*) What?

FRONT. That friend of yours, sir, Mr. Wright. He's a real gent—and a wonder. That's what he is. He's a wonder.

JULIA. You must be mistaken.

FRONT. Excuse me, Miss, but I ought to know the gent what give me a dollar for takin' him ice-water and another dollar for each one o' these bunches I took up to sixty-eight.

FRED. And you say Mr. Wright did that?

FRONT. That's just what I say, sir. Mr. Wright, the gent in suite "X."

FRED. You're wrong, my boy. Mr. Wright is in room 13.

FRONT. He was in that room, sir.

JULIA. And has he changed?

FRONT. Yes, Miss. And that ain't the only thing what's changed either. He's a wonder, that's what he is—a wonder.

FRED. Have you any idea where he is now?

FRONT. Down town. I think he went to buy the post-office.

FRED *and* JULIA. To buy the post-office?

FRONT. He wanted to buy something, but he hadn't quite made up his mind whether it was the post-office or the railroad depot. Oh, he's a real gent. And a wonder. Yes, sir, he's a wonder.

(*Exit* FRONT *to elevator* R. 3.)

JULIA. (*rises*) Well, what do you think of that?

FRED. The boy's mistaken.

JULIA. But he seemed so positive.

FRED. When Uncle Seymour gives dollars to bell-boys I'll be plucking violets at the North Pole. (*crosses* L. JULIA *goes* C.)

JULIA. It does seem absurd. Fancy uncle send-

ing a woman three bouquets in one morning. (*goes up* C. *one half*)

FRED. Preposterous!

(*Enter* TILLIE *from elevator* L. 3. *She is dressed rather extravagantly and walks with assumed dignity. She looks about and seeing no strangers resumes the maid's usual manner. Drops down* R. C.)

TILLIE. Everything is ready, Miss.

FRED. (*laughing*) You're good, Tillie, you're good.

JULIA. Isn't she? (*crossing to elevator* L. 3) Sorry you can't take me into luncheon, Fred.

FRED. (L. C. *one half*) Perhaps Tillie would honor me.

TILLIE. (*crosses up* C., *following* JULIA) I am to dine with Lord Brazenface, sir.

(*Exeunt* JULIA *and* TILLIE *to elevator.*)

FRED. This is more genuine fun than I've had in a long time. (*crosses down* L.)

SITES. (*in office* L. 3.) What do I care what it costs. When I want a thing I want it and expense cuts no figure. What's a thousand dollars to me? (*enters from office, completely metamorphosed in dress and manner, crosses down* C. *one half*)

FRED. (L. C., *astonished*) Holy Moses!

SITES. (*referring to clothes*) How do you like 'em, Fred. All right, eh?

FRED. Splendid, sir, but what does it all mean?

SITES. This, my boy, this is the concentrated, bottled-up wickedness of twenty-one years breaking loose. I thought it was dead, but it wasn't. It was only sleeping and now it's roused, like a giant refreshed with wine. Ah! There's another.

(*Bowing extravagantly in direction of elevator entrance.*)

FRED. But that is Miss Clingstone.

SITES. And what if it is! Does a man who has starved for twenty-one years refuse bread and ask for pie?

(*Enter* ARABELLA *from elevator.* SITES *grasps her hand and shakes it enthusiastically.*)

SITES. (*up* C. R.) So glad to see you, so very, very glad! You are looking as beautiful and blooming as the fairest rose that ever graced a grand June morning.

ARABELLA. (*up* R. C.) I beg your pardon, sir.

SITES. (*crosses down* C. L.) Don't be angry because of my mistake yesterday. I remember now that I have often heard Mr. Sites speak of you—Fred! Fred! You must have heard him more than once tell of the wonderful charms of his dear old friend, Miss Freestone.

ARABELLA. (R. C., *down*) Clingstone, if you please, sir, Miss Clingstone.

SITES. Well, madam, Freestone or Clingstone, nobody could deny that you are a peach.

ARABELLA. A peach!

SITES. Yes, but without its stony heart. My friend Sites has often said to me, "Wright, my boy, never marry till you have seen Miss Clingstone—and then you never will."

ARABELLA. Sir!

SITES. Never will marry anybody else. Those were his words and they were true, for to me, who met you but yesterday, it seems as though our acquaintance dated back fifty years—in spirit, madam, in spirit! Tell me, Miss Clingstone, could you—could

you marry a man who has nothing to offer you but his whole soul's devotion and ten million dollars.

ARABELLA. Really, Mr.—Mr.——

SITES. Wright, madam, but Adolphus if you like it better.

ARABELLA. Really, Mr. Wright, this is so embarrassing—and before this gentleman. (FRED, *with head upraised, walks toward window* UP L. C.)

SITES. (*goes to her*) Tell me, could you marry him?

ARABELLA. Since you insist, Adolphus—since you are so ardent, well, yes, I think I could.

SITES. (C.) Thank you! Thank you! When I find the man I will tell him he has no cause for fear.

ARABELLA. (*crosses* L. C., *turning*) How dare you, sir! How dare you trifle with my affection in such a way.

SITES. Trifle! I! I spoke in behalf of my old friend, Sites, and I guarantee you will receive an offer of marriage from him one hour after I meet him face to face.

ARABELLA. (*softening*) Do you think so?

SITES. I am sure of it. He will do whatever I advise him.

ARABELLA. Thank you. And now if you will excuse me. (*starts* R. C. UP)

SITES. (C.) Must you go?

ARABELLA. Yes, I feel rather unnerved. And besides my brother will be anxious about me.

SITES. Then permit me to escort you to the elevator.

ARABELLA. Oh no! No!

SITES. But I insist! I insist!

(SITES *walks with* ARABELLA *to elevator entrance—she exits—he bows extravagantly.*)

FRED. (*crosses down* L. C.) You carried that through splendidly.

SITES. (R. C. *one half*) That's nothing. You should have seen me when I was your age.

FRED. For a time I thought you were in earnest. I'll take good care you don't fool me again. (*crosses down* L.)

(*Enter* FRONT *from elevator* L. 3.)

(*CRASH.*)

SITES. (*to* FRONT) Did you give her the flowers? Are you sure she got 'em?

FRONT. (UP R.) Am I sure, sir? Why, I wouldn't trust nobody with 'em but me, I give 'em to her myself.

SITES. You did, eh? Well, here's a dollar. (*gives money*) And what did she say?

FRONT. She said, sir. Why, she said—Oh yes—I remember now—she said you was a wonder, sir—a wonder.

SITES. She said I was a wonder. Come and tell me that every few minutes. Here's five. (*gives money.* FRONT *starts to exit* L. 3. SITES *crosses down joyfully* R. C.; *stops, crosses* UP R. C. *one half*)

SITES. Front.

FRONT. (UP C. L.) Yes sir.

SITES. Get me a telegraph blank, quick.

(FRONT *rushes madly to office entrance* L. 3.)

SITES. Did you hear that, Fred? She said I was a wonder.

(*Re-enter* FRONT, *rushing and panting, with telegram.*)

FRONT. (*crosses down* C.) Hope I didn't keep you waiting, sir.

SITES. (*crosses, sits back of* TILLIE R., *writing telegram*) Thomas Ruckles, Manager,
567 Montgomery Street,
San Francisco, Cal.
Raise everybody's wages fifty per cent.
ADOLPHUS WRIGHT.

(FRONT *crosses to* SITES. *To* FRONT) Rush it. (FRONT *rushes for office*) Wait a minute. Wait a minute. (FRONT *rushes back. Writing*) "And date it back six months."

(SITES *hands telegram to* FRONT, *who dashes into office.*)

FRED. (*to* C. L. *one half*) That will be a surprise party to Ruckles. But will he know from whom it comes?

SITES. (*to* C. R.) Of course. Had to know my incog to be able to communicate with me. But, my boy, what do you think of Miss Oliver?

FRED. Think of her? She's a wonder. Five, please. (SITES *gives* FRED *a bill*)

SITES. But, joking apart. What do you think of her?

FRED. (*crossing* R. C., *pocketing money*) Charming, sir, charming.

SITES. (*to* L. C.) She can breakfast with me any day she wants to. If it wasn't for her, I'd take the next train for New York and I'd paint that benighted burg such a gay and spectacular carmine that it would stack up with a golden sun-set, like Pike's Peak against a consumptive mole hill.

FRED. But, then, you wouldn't capture Bailey.

SITES. Who cares for Bailey. He took only fifty thousand and he needed the money. (*goes* L., *counting money roll*)

FRED. (*aside*) This looks like a chance for me.

(*aloud, crossing* C.) Speaking of money, I have spent a good deal lately and——

SITES. (*pockets money* L. C., *interrupting*) And you need a little yourself. That's right, my boy, whenever you need cash come to me. All I ask is, if it's for a good cause—don't overlook your uncle. He has a few dollars to spend on good things himself.

FRED. I'll remember you, never fear.

SITES. Now, in regard to your present supply. When I started I figured on spending not more than three dollars a day.

FRED. That's simply burial charges.

SITES. But I've had a resurrection—and all my actual cash is gone.

FRED. That's awkward.

SITES. Not very. (*producing draft*) Thinking I might need some money for the Bailey matter, I brought a draft for two thousand dollars. You see it is drawn to the order of Seymour Sites. Now I am known here as Adolphus Wright and might have some difficulty in cashing it.

(HENRIETTA *appears at elevator entrance, crosses* UP C. *doors.*)

FRED. But I am known as Sites' nephew and can get it honored without any trouble.

SITES. That's the idea, exactly. So I'll endorse it, you get it cashed and we'll divide. That's fair, isn't it? (*crosses, sits* L. *of* TILLIE)

FRED. I should say so. (SITES *endorses draft and blots it on large blotter on writing desk* R.)

SITES. (*rises*) There's the signature. And your uncle couldn't have done it better himself—could he? (*gives draft to* FRED) Let's try the clerk here first and if he hasn't got it, you can go to the bank and we'll soon have our little thousand apiece.

(*Exeunt* SITES *and* FRED *to office* L. 3.)

HENRIETTA. (*crosses down* C. *one half*) "I'll endorse it, you get it cashed, and we'll divide. We'll soon get our little thousand apiece." What is his game now I wonder. (*goes to blotter—tries to decipher signature but fails—takes blotter* R.—*to mirror—reads signature in mirror*) S-e-y-m-o-u-r—Seymour! S-i-t-e-s—Seymour Sites! Another forgery. And the nephew's an accomplice. (*replacing blotter on table*) What a villain that man Bailey is and I was beginning to hope there was a mistake and he was innocent. (*crosses* C. *one half*) I really believe I was getting—interested—in him. This shall be a warning to me. But the nephew! That's a new development and an interesting one too. I'll cut this signature—no, I won't, I might not be able to prove where I got it. I'll keep the whole blotter. This is the best day's work I have ever done. (HENRIETTA *carrying blotter—one of the large square ones used on writing desks—crosses* L.)

SITES. (*crosses down* C., *reappearing* L. 3) My dear Miss Oliver!

(HENRIETTA, *astonished and dismayed, holds the blotter behind her and backs to sofa—drops blotter on sofa and sits on it.* SITES *crosses to her.*)

SITES. (*joyfully*) I'm a wonder, eh?

HENRIETTA. What did you say?

SITES. I said "I'm a wonder."

HENRIETTA. Yes, I think you are.

SITES. Well, if I am a wonder, what are you I wonder.

HENRIETTA. Really, I don't know.

SITES. Then I'll tell you. You are the king pin in the bowling alley of women. (*walks joyfully* R. C., *after tapping her playfully on shoulder*)

HENRIETTA. (*aside*) If I could only get rid of him.

SITES. (*to* C.) You received the few modest flowers I sent you?

HENRIETTA. Yes, they were lovely. Thank you very much.

SITES. Don't mention it. They were just a slight tribute to one whose beauty shames the fairest flowers that ever blew. (*taking* HENRIETTA'S *hand*) If I could only tell you how much—(HENRIETTA *withdraws hand*) What's the matter? You let me hold it yesterday.

HENRIETTA. The circumstances were different then. I fainted.

SITES. Just to oblige me, couldn't you faint again?

HENRIETTA. Do what?

SITES. Faint again! I wish to pour in your ear my whole soul's devotion, and I think I could pour it better if you didn't quite know what I was pouring. You see, I haven't made love to a woman for quite a few days now.

HENRIETTA. I'm sorry for that. I object to amateurs.

SITES. Why this coldness, Henrietta?

HENRIETTA. (*rises*) Sir! (*remembering blotter, and sitting suddenly*) You are presuming.

SITES. But why this change? Yesterday you gave me the melting glance and to-day I get the freezing glare.

HENRIETTA. You are mistaken, sir.

SITES. Perhaps I am, but just the same there's more in this than appears on the surface.

HENRIETTA. (*business with blotter*) Well, yes, perhaps there is.

SITES. Then tell me what it is that I may blot it out—Come now, let's drop all our little differences and go for a quiet stroll on the beach.

HENRIETTA. I must deline; in fact I can't go.

SITES. (*suspiciously*) Can't go.

HENRIETTA. No. I must stay here.

SITES. Waiting for somebody?

HENRIETTA. That's it. That's it. I'm waiting for a friend.

SITES. (*sitting beside* HENRIETTA) Then I'll keep you company till your friend comes.

HENRIETTA. That's very good of you, but it wouldn't be fair. She is likely to be so long.

SITES. The longer the better since it leaves me with you. It will enable me to tell you of the passion——

HENRIETTA. (*interrupting*) Not now! Not now!

SITES. But now is the time. I might have a relapse by to-morrow.

HENRIETTA. The fact is, I am very cross and irritable to-day.

SITES. Who would have thought it. Is there anything I can do for you?

HENRIETTA. Yes. Get me a drink of water, please.

SITES. Make it wine! Make it wine!

HENRIETTA. No. Water from that cooler, please. (*pointing* C.)

SITES. Certainly.

(SITES *crosses to water cooler* C. UP, *starts to draw water*—HENRIETTA *rises and anxiously watching* SITES, *pulls blotter half way out. He notices the action in the mirror and turns.* HENRIETTA *pushes blotter back and sits quickly.* SITES, *puzzled, brings water. She drinks and returns glass.*)

SITES. (*crossing* UP *to water cooler*) What's the meaning of this—jack in the box business, I wonder.

(SITES *replaces glass and watches mirror closely.* HENRIETTA *hastily places blotter under sofa and rises.* SITES *sees the action.*)

SITES. (UP C. *one half. Aside*) I'm going to see what that is if it takes a life time.

HENRIETTA. (*crosses* R. C. *Gaily*) How refreshing that was, I feel better now and will go for the stroll as you suggested. (SITES *takes* HENRIETTA'S *seat on sofa*) I thought you wanted to go on the beach.

SITES. I did, but I'm interested in that friend of yours now. (SITES *tries to reach blotter with his foot*—HENRIETTA *observes him*)

HENRIETTA. (R. C. *Aside*) He saw me. (*aloud*) Surely after my accepting your invitation you don't intend to withdraw it. (*sitting beside him and taking his hand*) You have no idea how disappointed I should be.

SITES. What's that? Right near your foot! It's a mouse—a great big mouse.

(HENRIETTA *screams and stands on sofa with skirts raised.* SITES *pantomimes aside to show it is only a trick.*)

SITES. Keep perfectly quiet. Don't move and you'll be in no danger. (SITES *gets down on hands and knees in front of sofa. Just as he is going to look under sofa,* HENRIETTA, *guessing his purpose, sits squarely in front of him. He slowly raises his head till his eyes meet hers*)

(*Enter* FRED *from office.*)

FRED. (*crosses down* C. *one half*) I've got the money! I've got the money!

SITES. (*on knees, crawls around back of sofa to* FRED) Go and play solitaire with it. I'm busy looking for a pin.

FRED. But, we've got to divide, you know.

SITES. (*rising and pushing* FRED UP C. L. *toward office*) Go away! Go away! (*apart*) Go outside and break one of those windows for me. (*pointing* L.)

(HENRIETTA *takes blotter from under sofa and sits on it again*)

FRED. (C. L. *one half. Apart*) Break a window!

SITES. (UP C. *one half. Apart*) Yes, and be quick about it.

(*Exit* FRED *to office.* SITES *returns to sofa, sits. Pantomime expressing he has another idea. Takes out handkerchief. Wipes face.*)

SITES. That boy will be the death of me.

(SITES *drops handkerchief. In picking it up looks under sofa, but sees nothing. Rises, sits on sofa.* FRED *breaks the window with a crash.*)

HENRIETTA. (*Jumping up and turning* L.) What's that?

(SITES *sees blotter—picks it up—stares at it. Then fans himself with it.* HENRIETTA *turns again and sees* SITES *with blotter.*)

HENRIETTA. Very clever.

SITES. (*rising*) Not bad for an amateur. (*goes* C.)

HENRIETTA. (*to* L. C.) And now I suppose you understand matters.

SITES. Blessed if I do.

HENRIETTA. Of course not, you innocent thing!

But I'm going to get that blotter—and you—if I have to rouse the hotel.

SITES. Get me.

HENRIETTA. That's what I said. Now do you want publicity or will you give up without it?

SITES. Publicity! Give up! (*aside*) Blackmail. (*aloud*) So that's your little game, is it?

HENRIETTA. Exactly.

SITES. Then let me tell you, you've made a mistake in your man.

HENRIETTA. That's what they all say.

SITES. Well, I mean it. So rouse the hotel, shriek for help, trot out the injured husband and I won't give up a cent. (*pantomine for* HENRIETTA *indicating she sees he is on the wrong track*)

HENRIETTA. But I have no husband and don't expect any money. I simply want that blotter.

SITES. You need it in your business. I suppose.

HENRIETTA. Not exactly in my business, perhaps. But I need it very badly or I would not have permitted it to come so near to causing a misunderstanding with one whom I esteem so highly.

(*Sound of clerk's gong heard in office.* FRONT *enters from office and crosses leisurely toward elevator.*)

SITES. (C. R., *referring to blotter*) And is this the cause of all the trouble?

HENRIETTA. (L. C.) It is.

SITES. Front.

FRONT. (UP C., *rushing to* SITES) Yes, sir.

SITES. Buy five dollars' worth of blotters and take them up to sixty-eight.

FRONT. Yes sir. (*crosses* UP, *at office entrance*) Wouldn't you like a barrel of ink as well, sir?

(*Exit* FRONT *to office.*)

HENRIETTA. But I shall have no use for all those blotters.

SITES. Then keep them as souvenirs of the day we met, just as I intend to keep this one.

HENRIETTA. (*approaching him*) But that is the very one I want. Now, Mr. Wright, dear Mr. Wright, give it to me—won't you, please?

SITES. Who could resist you. You shall have it on one condition. Meet me on the drill grounds at the Fort at half-past three this afternoon.

HENRIETTA. With pleasure—(*aside, goes* L. C.) And a detective.

SITES. Then it is yours. (*hands blotter to* HENRIETTA, *but keeps hold of two corners*)

HENRIETTA. Thank you, and now—(*backing toward elevator,* SITES *following, each retaining hold on two corners of the blotter and bowing together*) Good-bye, till half-past three.

SITES. Till half-past three.

(*Exit* HENRIETTA *with blotter to elevator.* SITES *stands* C., *smiling at* HENRIETTA. *Enter* FRONT *from office.*)

FRONT. It'll cost you a dollar, sir, for cartage on them blotters. (SITES *hands* FRONT *a dollar without looking at him*)

FRONT. (*crossing back to office*) I'm losing me nerve. Ought to have made it five.

(*Exit* FRONT *to office.*)

SITES. And to think I doubted her. (*starting for office*) I must send her another bouquet.

(*Enter* JULIA *from elevator* R. 3.)

JULIA. (*crosses* C. R. *one half*) Uncle! I mean "Mr. Wright."

SITES. (UP L. C. *one half, turning*) Hello, Julia.

JULIA. There's to be a matinee at the Soldiers' Home this afternoon, and Fred has an engagement. Do you care to go?

SITES. Nothing would please me better, my dear, but the fact is, I—I have heard some news about Bailey which makes it necessary for me to leave for Huntington at three o'clock.

JULIA. I'm very sorry, but probably I can find some other escort. You'll be back to-night?

SITES. Certainly, my dear, certainly. (JULIA *crosses down* L., *aside*) Matinee; what I'm looking for is a circus.

(*Exit* SITES *to office. Enter* TILLIE *from elevator, she crosses stage* UP C.)

JULIA. (L. C., *seeing* TILLIE) Going out?

TILLIE. (C. *one half*) Yes, Miss. I have an engagement with Lord Brazenface.

JULIA. (*crossing* UP L. C. *one half*) How are you and his lordship getting along?

TILLIE. Nicely, thank you, Miss. He's very sociable—wanted to kiss me last night.

JULIA. How kind of him.

(*Enter* LORD BRAZENFACE R. 2.)

LORD B. (*to* TILLIE) Good-morning, Miss Bonds. Lovely weather for our stroll. Are you ready?

TILLIE. Quite, thank you.

LORD B. (*crossing to* L. 2) This way, then, please. (*opens door.* TILLIE *exits* L 2)

LORD B. (*crossing to* JULIA *and chucking her under chin*) You're a very pretty girl.

JULIA. How dare you! (*backing toward office entrance*)

LORD B. (*following*) Got a temper too! But I don't mind. What's your name?

(*Enter* CROSBY *from office*—JULIA *backs toward him*)

LORD B. You look stunning like that, you do, really.

(JULIA *backs into* CROSBY'S *arms and gives a little scream of surprise.*)

LORD B. Hello, Crosby.

CAPTAIN. My appearance seems rather opportune for this young lady, and you will oblige me, Brazenface—by——

TILLIE. (*reappearing* L. 2) Are you coming, Brazy?

LORD B. In a moment. I dropped my handkerchief and your maid was good enough to call my attention to it. (*to* JULIA) Thank you, my dear, thank you very much. I am a killer. (*crosses* L 2)

*Exeunt* LORD B. *and* TILLIE L. 2.)

CAPTAIN. (UP C.) I hope you were not much frightened.

JULIA. (UP L. C.) I was more astonished than afraid.

CAPTAIN. If I had only come a few seconds sooner.

JULIA. Your arrival could not have been more timely, and I thank you very sincerely. (JULIA *turns as if to go* L. 3)

CAPTAIN. Please don't go. (JULIA *stops*) Unfortunately I was not introduced to you at our meeting yesterday. My name is Crosby. I am captain of the 2nd Illinois.

JULIA. (*drops down* L. 3.) I am Miss Bird.

CAPTAIN. (*drops down* C.) Thank you. And Miss Bird, may I—I should say we—may we not hope to have the pleasure of seeing you more than we have done since your arrival.

JULIA. Perhaps you misunderstand my position. I am Miss Bond's maid.

CAPTAIN. Yes, but there is no mistaking a lady however she may be circumstanced. I should only be too happy to be of some service—show you round the Fort, or anything like that.

JULIA. You are very kind, but I am afraid I must decline.

CAPTAIN. May I ask why?

JULIA. Because of the difference in our stations. (*crosses* R. C.)

CAPTAIN. (C.) That doesn't affect me, I assure you.

JULIA. But it does me. No, captain, it would never do, for you are like the knight of the old ballad and I am only the waiting maid.

CAPTAIN. But I swear——

JULIA. So did the knight.

CAPTAIN. I protest.

JULIA. So did he.

CAPTAIN. This isn't fair. Do let me see you.

JULIA. I'm afraid not. (*starts* UP R. C.)

CAPTAIN. But don't you ever go for a stroll?

JULIA. Yes.

CAPTAIN. To the drill grounds?

JULIA. Occasionally.

CAPTAIN. In the afternoon?

JULIA. Sometimes.

CAPTAIN. At half-past three.

JULIA. About.

CAPTAIN. This afternoon?

JULIA. Probably.

CAPTAIN. Then if duty calls me to the drill grounds at half-past three, I shall see you.

JULIA. Perhaps.

CAPTAIN. Do say "yes."

JULIA. Couldn't.

CAPTAIN. Why not?

JULIA. Miss Bonds may need me. (*gets* UP R. C. *one half*)

CAPTAIN. (UP C. *one half*) But if she doesn't. Come now, if she doesn't.

JULIA. If she doesn't——?

CAPTAIN. Well?

JULIA. Well—may be.

(*Exit* JULIA *to elevator.*)

CAPTAIN. That's tantalizingly indefinite. But I'll be there.

(*Enter* CLINGSTONE R. 2.)

CLINGSTONE. (*down* R. C.) Ah, Ralph, how are you and the young lady progressing?

CAPTAIN. (*crosses down* C. L.) Er—rather nicely, I think, uncle.

CLINGSTONE. (C. R.) That pleases me greatly. Far be it from me to advise a marriage for mercenary reasons—but you would do well, I think, to consider that you have simply your captain's pay, while she has a million in her own right.

CAPTAIN. That's news to me.

CLINGSTONE. I thought I had informed you that Miss Bonds was wealthy.

CAPTAIN. Miss Bonds! Yes. Oh yes! So you had. But to tell the truth, uncle, I don't think Miss Bonds and I would suit each other at all. She seems —what shall I say?—just—a trifle vulgar.

CLINGSTONE. Eccentric Ralph! Eccentric! Only the poor are vulgar.

CAPTAIN. She says, "I have saw" I could never marry a woman who says, "I have saw." (*crosses* R. C.)

CLINGSTONE. (C.) Simply a trifling detail which can easily be remedied.

CAPTAIN. If she were half as charming as Miss Bird——

CLINGSTONE. (*interrupting*) And who, may I ask, is Miss Bird?

CAPTAIN. Miss Bird! She—why—she is Miss Bond's maid.

CLINGSTONE. Her maid? My boy, this will never do. Far be it from me to say anything against the young lady——

CAPTAIN. That would hardly be advisable, uncle.

CLINGSTONE. But consider your position, and your fellow officers. Would their wives associate with a servant?

CAPTAIN. The woman who honors me by becoming Mrs. Crosby, will be to me the first lady in the world. If the wives of other men have a different opinion they can go hang themselves, as far as I am concerned.

CLINGSTONE. But promise me you will do nothing rash.

CAPTAIN. Of course I won't, uncle. I flatter myself—I keep my feelings too well in hand for that.

CLINGSTONE. I hope so, fervently hope so—for your sake—for it would never do, my boy, it would never do.

(*Exit* CLINGSTONE L. 2.)

CAPTAIN. (*to* C.) He is right. It would never do. I must content myself with the only wife a soldier should have—his sword.

(*Enter* LORD B. *and* TILLIE L. 2.)

LORD B. Honestly, Miss Bonds, you are the best fellow of a girl I ever met.

TILLIE. Hear him, Captain, hear him try to "chaff me."

CAPTAIN. I hardly think Lord Brazenface is doing that.

LORD B. Of course not—mean every word of it —upon me honor I do.

TILLIE. If I didn't have money, you wouldn't look at me; you know you wouldn't.

LORD. B. Wouldn't I? If you didn't have a shilling, I should still think you the jolliest girl in the world, for you can take a joke, you laugh in the right place at a funny story, and you sing a good song. You would be a divinity complete if you could only dance.

TILLIE. If I could only dance. All American society girls can do that, can't they, captain?

CAPTAIN. So I have heard.

LORD B. But I don't mean the two step, the waltz, or any of those things. I mean a regular out and out dance, you know.

TILLIE. That's just what I mean.

LORD B. And can you dance like that?

TILLIE. Give me your opinion when I've finished.

(*Dance for* TILLIE.)

(*While dance is on, enter* CLINGSTONE *and* ARABELLA *from elevator, as though to cross to* L. 2. TILLIE *kicks high, to the discomfiture of* CLINGSTONE *and* ARABELLA, *who exit hastily* L. 2. *Before dance is finished* CLINGSTONE *looks cautiously from* L. 2. *but quickly closes door again at seeing dance still on. At conclusion of dance*)

CAPTAIN *and* LORD B. Bravo! Bravo!

LORD B. Awfully, beastly jolly, that's what I call it.

TILLIE. But, fearfully warm. Was it worth a soda water?

CAPTAIN. Indeed it was. Permit me. (*offering*)

LORD B. (*offering arm*) Permit me. I'll make it a brandy and soda water.

TILLIE. (*accepting the arm of each*) I can stand both of them. Come along.

(*Exeunt* TILLIE, LORD B. *and* CAPTAIN *to office* L. 3. *Enter* CLINGSTONE L. 2.)

CLINGSTONE. (*crosses* C. *one half*) You may enter now without fear, Arabella.

(*Enter* ARABELLA L. 2.)

ARABELLA. (L. C.) It is simply shocking, simply shocking. What do you intend to do about it—Wayland?

CLINGSTONE. I don't know, my dear. (*enter* SITES *from office*) Let us consult this gentleman. (*to* SITES) We have just witnessed a most disgraceful scene.

SITES. Here?

ARABELLA. Yes.

SITES. What was it?

CLINGSTONE. It was—Arabella kindly withdraw a few paces while I break the sad news to Mr. Wright. (ARABELLA *goes up* L. C. *stage*) It was—a dance by a young lady.

SITES. Is that all?

CLINGSTONE. But she (*whispering*) she elevated her pedal extremities.

SITES. Did what?

(CLINGSTONE *points to his toes then raises his hand to indicate a high kick.*)

SITES. High kicking?

CLINGSTONE. I—I believe that is the name for the—operation.

SITES. You don't say! How high did she kick? That high! (*standing on tip-toes and raising hand as high as possible*)

CLINGSTONE. Really, sir, I don't know how high it was.

SITES. Then you are a disgrace to your sex.

ARABELLA. (*coming down* L. C.) Wasn't it awful?

SITES. Not a bit of it. Youth will have its "fling" and we have all been young. (*to* ARABELLA) Even you were young once. (ARABELLA *draws herself up in indignation*) Yes, you were, it's no use trying to deny it. And during that time didn't you ever (*dances a few burlesque steps*)

ARABELLA. Never, sir! Never!

CLINGSTONE. My sister never even witnessed such an exhibition.

SITES. I suppose you never did either; you hadn't used to see them every chance you could get; Oh no! (CLINGSTONE *crosses to* ARABELLA) You didn't engage two of them to dance at your birthday party at college, did you. Of course not—it wasn't you—it was a man from Oskaloosa.

(*During the above speech* CLINGSTONE *has been trying to get* ARABELLA *out of earshot.*)

CLINGSTONE. (*going to* SITES) Please, please refrain from mentioning the follies of my youth in the presence of my sister.

SITES. (*down* R. C.) My friend Seymour Sites has told me things about you that would make the

Maharajah of Carputhania green with envy. Ah, if you had only been like Sites, a model student free from all trace of wildness and wickedness—you would have nothing to regret now.

CLINGSTONE. (*indignantly*) Nothing to regret! Why, he was—he was—was—(*changing*) But it is against my principles to speak of the past of any man who has reformed as Mr. Sites has done.

SITES. So Sites has reformed, has he?

CLINGSTONE. He has, indeed. But, reverting to our original subject, you would advise me to say nothing to the authorities about the exhibition of which I have spoken.

SITES. Nothing whatever to any one.

CLINGSTONE. Thank you. Thank you. I will be guided by your advice. (*crossing with* ARABELLA *toward* L. 2) But I think it was disgraceful—disgraceful. (*turning at exit*) Especially as the young lady was one who should have known better, being Mr. Sites' niece.

SITES. (C.) What? Sites' niece?

CLINGSTONE. Yes, Miss Bonds.

(*Exeunt* CLINGSTONE *and* ARABELLA L. 2.)

SITES. Julia! That's different. But I don't believe it. And yet—why not?

(*Enter* FRONT *from office with telegram and blanks, hands to* SITES.)

SITES. (*opens telegram, looks at signature*) From Ruckles, I'll bet he was surprised. *Areading telegram*) "Som one has discovered your incog and wired me to raise salaries fifty per cent." He doesn't believe I sent the message, imagines I can't raise salaries if I wish to. I'll fool him. (*crosses* R.,

*writes*) "The raise goes, only date it back a year instead of six months." (*hands telegram to* FRONT. FRONT *exits to office*) I guess that will teach him a lesson.

(*Enter* JULIA *from elevator, crosses* DOWN C. L.)

SITES. (*to* C.) Come here, Miss. These are nice stories I hear about you.

JULIA. About me?

SITES. Yes, they tell me you give dancing exhibitions here and er—(*repeats* CLINGSTONE'S *business about high kicking*) you know.

JULIA. It's untrue—every word of it.

SITES. You deny it?

JULIA. Absolutely.

SITES. Well, I didn't put much faith in it myself.

JULIA. I'm surprised that you could put any faith in it. (*showing symptoms of crying*) If my uncle who has known me since childhood believes it how can I blame strangers if they do the same.

SITES. Yes, but I don't believe it.

JULIA. But you did. How could you?

SITES. There, dear, there, don't take it to heart so. Everything will be all right, so let the smiles come back to your face. That's it, that's it. And I'll help the good work along. (SITES *kisses* JULIA)

(*Enter* TILLIE, LORD B. *and* CAPTAIN *from office* L. 3)

LORD B. Encore! Encore! Go it, old chap. Don't mind us.

SITES. Excuse me, sir, you are making a mistake. This young lady is my—(*aside*) I daren't tell. (*aloud*) It will be all right when you understand.

(TILLIE R., BRAZENFACE R. C., SITES C., JULIA L. C., CAPTAIN L.)

CAPTAIN. I understand now, sir. You have taken advantage of this young lady's being here without a protector.

TILLIE. And ought to be thoroughly ashamed of yourself.

SITES. But, I tell you that you're all mistaken. Why, I'm old enough to her father.

CAPTAIN. And does that make any difference, sir?

SITES. I should say it does. You ought to study up on these fine points.

LORD B. Right you are, old boy, right you are. Hang it, Crosby, you can't expect us young fellows to have all the fun.

SITES. I would have you understand that I don't kiss this young lady for fun.

LORD B. What do you do it for—exercise?

(*Enter* FRED *from office.*)

FRED. What's the trouble?

SITES. No trouble at all.

LORD B. Of course not. Simply a little osculatory passage between December and May, interrupted by our unexpected appearance.

SITES. Well, that's all right, isn't it, Fred?

FRED. You gray-headed old sinner; what would your wife say?

TILLIE, LORD B., CAPTAIN *and* JULIA. His wife?

FRED. Yes. The cutest little brunette!

SITES. Don't you believe him. Don't you believe him.

CAPTAIN. (*crosses to* SITES) This makes matters all the worse. I'll see, sir, that you leave this hotel.

SITES. Leave the hotel. Not on your steam yacht.

CAPTAIN. We'll see about that, sir.

SITES. What business is this of yours, anyway? Where do you come in?

CAPTAIN. I claim the right of an honest man to defend an innocent girl.

SITES. But I tell you there's nothing in it. And to show what I think of your opinions and the opinions of all the others. (*to* JULIA) Come here. (JULIA *goes to* SITES. HENRIETTA *appears at elevator entrance*—CLINGSTONE *and* ARABELLA *appear* L. 2) What do you think of this. (*kisses* JULIA *three times*) And this, (*kiss*) and this, (*kiss*. and this (*kiss*)

(SITES *starts toward* L. 2, *sees* CLINGSTONE *and* ARABELLA. *Turns toward elevator entrance, sees* HENRIETTA. *Crosses to* C. *followed by* HENRIETTA. FRONT *enters from office.*)

FRONT. Did you ring, sir?

SITES. Yes. Send for an ambulance.

CURTAIN

## ACT III

SCENE:—*The parade ground at Fort Monroe. Old fortification about eight feet high, running from* L. U. E. *to* R. U. E. *Cannon pointing out to sea. Large archway* C. *Marine drop back, showing through arch the battle ships, New York, and Indiana, at anchor. Set officers' quarters* R. 2, *and* R. 4. *Flag staff with stars and stripes flying* UP *stage* R. *Set tree opposite* L. 3. *Bench at foot of tree. Turf has been removed and replaced with sand in circle round tree.*

*Entrances through archway* C.—*to officers' quarters* R. 2, *and* R. 4, L. 2, L. 4.

TIME: Same afternoon.

*At rise of curtain enter* JULIA C. R. 4. She *carries a sunshade.*

JULIA. (*crosses down* C.) How angry the captain was. I believe he was jealous too. But, when I told him Mr. Wright was my uncle—that straightened matters immediately. I wonder if he'll come. (*sits at tree* L.)

(*Enter* LORD B. C. R. 4, following JULIA.)

LORD B. (*crosses down* C.) My dear girl, why do you hurry so? A fellow can't catch up with you. You shouldn't expect it; really you shouldn't.

JULIA. Expect it!

LORD B. Certainly. You knew I was following you.

JULIA. I knew nothing of the kind.

LORD B. No! Really! Didn't you turn your head several times and go (*nods*)

JULIA. No sir. I did not.

LORD B. Dear me, how bad my eyesight must be getting.

JULIA. It seems to me, Lord Brazenface, that a man in your position should be above persecuting a girl in mine.

LORD B. Don't lecture. Please don't. Not that I object. Oh dear, no. But it isn't becoming—especially after that little affair this morning.

JULIA. I assure you, sir, there was no harm in that.

LORD B. Harm in kissing! The very idea. But why hurt my feelings by selecting an old codger like Wright, when I am about?

JULIA. To save all possible misunderstanding I will tell you, (*rises*) in confidence, that Mr. Wright is my uncle.

LORD B. Your uncle? Ha, ha! That's rich, that is. Your uncle!

JULIA. (*goes* C.) Yes sir, my uncle.

LORD. B. Certainly my dear, certainly! Too old to be your cousin—therefore your uncle. Come I say. I may look young, but I'm more than six.

(*Enter* TILLIE C. R. 4.)

TILLIE. (*crosses down* L. C., *sharply*) I thought I should find you here.

LORD B. (*crosses* C. *to her.* JULIA R. C.) And so you came. How jolly of you.

TILLIE. Looking from my window I saw you following Miss Bird, my maid—and knowing she was coming here I had little trouble in finding you.

LORD B. I, follow your maid! The very idea.

TILLIE. But I saw you.

LORD B. Oh well, if you saw me, that's different.

JULIA. If you will excuse me, Miss, I will go.

TILLIE. I shan't need you again this afternoon. (*goes to tree* L. C.)

LORD B. (*crosses. Apart to* JULIA) If you wish to make another appointment——!

(JULIA *looks indignantly at* LORD B., *turns disdainfully and exits* R. 2.)

LORD. B. Gad, I am a killer. (*crosses* C.)

TILLIE. Aren't you ashamed of yourself?

LORD B. Not at all. Because one adores the moon is no reason why one should not admire a star. (JULIA) By jove, that's not half bad.

TILLIE. (*sitting on bench at foot of tree*) If I were the maid and not the lady——!

LORD B. You would still be the moon and I should still be moonstruck. That's another good one. I'm in great form this afternoon.

TILLIE. I don't believe you care for me at all.

LORD B. You are the only woman I have ever loved and you can be Lady Brazenface any day you choose to name.

TILLIE. You'll change your mind.

LORD B. Whatever may be said against the Brazenfaces they marry whom they choose and they keep their word.

TILLIE. But I'm not pretty and smart like some girls I know. I can only dance.

LORD B. Oh, well. You'll find lots of others who have danced and kicked themselves into the aristocracy.

(LORD B. *is about to seat himself near* TILLIE. *She rises.*)

TILLIE. You can sit there if you want to. I'm going. (*crosses* C. *one half*)

LORD B. (L. C. *one half*) Far?

TILLIE. Not very.

LORD B. Then I'll go with you and—what do you say to coming back after awhile to see the soldiers drill.

TILLIE. Wouldn't that be splendid.

LORD B. It's the silliest thing. Great big strapping chaps doing this kind of thing, you know. (*business*) Forward march! Right face! Left. right! Great big fellows who could work, you know. It's the silliest thing.

(*Enter* CLINGSTONE R. 2.)

CLINGSTONE. (R. C.) I beg your pardon. May I speak with you alone for a moment, my lord?

LORD B. This young lady——!

TILLIE. (*interrupting*) Don't mind me. I'm going to the pier. Good-by.

(*Exit* TILLIE L. U. E.)

LORD B. (*crosses* DOWN C.) And now, old chap, fire away.

CLINGSTONE. (R. C.) It is about my nephew, Captain Crosby. He is in love with that young lady's maid.

LORD B. Shows jolly good taste, too.

CLINGSTONE. But imagine his position if he marries her. The wives of the other officers would never associate with a servant.

LORD B. He could quit the service.

CLINGSTONE. But how would he live? He has no income but his pay.

LORD B. That is awkward.

CLINGSTONE. I wish you would put the matter to him in its proper light, my lord. I am sure your words would have great weight.

LORD B. Certainly they would, certainly. I'll speak to him and then it will be all right.

CLINGSTONE. Thank you. Thank you. Good-afternoon, my lord, good-afternoon.

(*Exit* CLINGSTONE R. 2.)

LORD B. (*alone*) I'll arrange matters the first chance I get. Of course he'll do what I advise. Of course he will.

(*Exit* LORD B. L. U. E.)

(*Enter* HENRIETTA *and* CLEWS C. *from* R.)

HEN. (L. C.) You have the warrants for Bailey and young Mr. Bonds?

CLEWS. (C.) That part of the business is all right. But are you sure of your man?

HEN. So sure that I've planned a trip to Europe on the reward.

CLEWS. But remember what the chief said. You must have a confession.

HEN. That's what I'm after this afternoon and I want you as a witness. I'm to meet Bailey here in a few minutes. You hang about till you see me with him, and then keep within hearing distance.

CLEWS. I understand. But what kind of a man is he?

HEN. I can't quite make him out. In fact somehow I feel sorry for him. But business is business, you know.

CLEWS. I mean, is he likely to make trouble?

HEN. He seems as harmless as a dove, but just the same I think he'd put up a beautiful fight if he were cornered.

CLEWS. You do, eh?

HEN. Yes. Now we mustn't be seen together so you had better go. But be sure and keep me in sight as I suggested. (*goes down* L.)

CLEWS. All right! All right! (*aside, going to* R. 4.) He'd put up a beautiful fight! I don't like that.

(*Exit* CLEWS R. 4.)

HEN. (*sits by tree*) I don't quite understand that kissing episode, and for a minute—well, I believe I felt jealous. If I can feel sympathy for a criminal I'd better get out of the business (*looking off* R. 2.) Why, there comes that girl now. What can she be doing here I wonder. (*hides behind tree*)

(*Enter* JULIA R. 2, *with sunshade raised.. She looks about.*)

JULIA. (R. C.) I wonder why he doesn't come. It must be half-past three now.

(*Enter* SITES C. *from* L. *Sees* JULIA *whose face is hidden by sunshade.*)

SITES. (*up* C. *one half*) The fair Henrietta. I'll simulate indifference.

(SITES *strolls carelessly toward* JULIA. *Coughs to attract her attention.* HENRIETTA *watching.*)

JULIA. (R. C. *Aside*) The captain.

SITES. (C.) I beg your pardon.

(JULIA *turns quickly to* SITES.)

SITES. Why, it's Julia.

JULIA. What brings you here. You said you had

business in Huntington, which must be transacted this afternoon.

SITES. So I had! So I had.

JULIA. Evidently you didn't go.

SITES. Of course not. You see I—I—I——

JULIA. Yes.

SITES. (*aside*) I—(*aloud*) I should be there now only for that impudent young captain who interfered this morning.

JULIA. What has he to do with it?

SITES. (*impressively*) He sent word he wished to meet me here on a question of honor. And when honor is concerned I let business slide. (*pantomimes aside, expressing amusement at the idea. Goes* C. L. *one half*)

JULIA. (*aside*) What a story! He doesn't know I told the captain. (*aloud*) Surely you are not going to fight.

SITES. (DOWN C.) That will be for him to say. A few brass buttons and a blue coat don't scare me. If he wants a fight—he shall have it. But how about that matinee? What brings you here?

JULIA. (*hesitating* I—I— (*sympathetically*) I came here to save your life.

SITES. What's that?

JULIA. Captain Crosby is a terrible man and you must leave this place immediately, for I heard him say he had an appointment to kill you here at half-past three. (*goes* R.)

SITES. You heard him say— (*aside*) She's lying to me. She's lying to me.

JULIA. (*aside*) I must get him away. (*aloud*) He'll be here in a moment. Don't meet him. He's terribly angry. Go! Please go. Go anywhere—only go. (*crosses* UP R. C. *one half*)

SITES. (C. *Aside*) She's trying to get rid of me. What's her little game?

JULIA. (DOWN R.) He is a noted duelist. If he sees you here you are a dead man, so fly—fly——

SITES. In the face of the enemy. Never! (*aside*) I'll see this through if it's the last act of my life. (*goes* UP C. *one half*)

(*Enter* CROSBY *from officers' quarters and carrying a cane* R. 2.)

JULIA. R. C. (*rushing to* CROSBY) Spare his life! Spare it for my sake! (*apart*) Pretend to be angry.

CAPTAIN. (R.) Spare his life! Never! Never! (*apart*) What is it all about?

JULIA. (*apart*) Me. Go on! Go on!

CAPTAIN. (*crosses* C. to SITES) You have—you have grossly insulted this young lady.

SITES. (C. L.) I have, have I?

CAPTAIN. You have persecuted her with your attentions. Against her wishes, you have followed her here.

JULIA. (*close to* CROSBY. *Apart*) No! No!

CAPTAIN. Why do you persist, sir. Why do you persist in—in—in——

JULIA. (*at* CAPTAIN'S R. *side. Apart*) Kissing me.

CAPTAIN. In kissing me.

SITES. Kissing you!

CAPTAIN. I mean her—in kissing her.

SITES. None of your business.

CAPTAIN. But I make it my business, sir. You shall answer for it—to me.

SITES. Well, you can have any kind of answer you like, bowie knives, boomerangs, gatlin guns, tomahawks or any old thing you want to mention.

CAPTAIN. Do you mean fight, sir?

(*Detective appears* C. R. 4.)

SITES. That's just what I mean. You pitched into

me this morning about something that didn't concern you—now you do it again, and we might as well settle this thing now and here. (*faces* CAPTAIN *closely*)

CAPTAIN. Very good, sir.

JULIA. Don't fight! Please don't.

SITES. You couldn't stop me now with a cyclone. (*crosses* DOWN L. S. *walk, agitated.*)

DETECTIVE. That's a dangerous man. (*withdraws off* C. R.)

JULIA. (*apart to* CAPTAIN) Apologize. Please do.

CAPTAIN. (*apart*) But, really, I——

JULIA. (*apart*) For my sake.

CAPTAIN. (C.) This young lady tells me I have been mistaken and so I—I withdraw my remarks.

SITES. (*crosses to him*) Well, I don't. Everything I said goes, and goes right up to the handle, too.

HENRIETTA. (L. *of tree, hidden*) He's as brave as a lion.

JULIA. But this gentleman apologizes. Don't you, Captain?

CAPTAIN. Yes, I apologize.

JULIA. You couldn't ask more than that.

SITES. And so you apologize and withdraw all remarks, do you.

CAPTAIN. Yes.

SITES. Then, I suppose I'll have to let it go at that. You military chaps are all right in your way, but when you begin mixing bluffs you ought to remember that there are a few others. You can go now.

CAPTAIN. I can go?

SITES. That's what I said.

CAPTAIN. But I can't go. I have an engagement here with a lady.

SITES. (*looking at* JULIA) Just what I thought.

CAPTAIN. But not with this lady, I assure you.

My engagement was with—was with—Miss Henrietta Oliver.

(HENRIETTA, *surprised for a moment, then situation dawns on her.* SITES *goes* L. C., *surprised.* CAPTAIN *goes to* JULIA *for a moment.*)

HENRIETTA. (*aside*) You shall pay dearly for that.

(HENRIETTA *exits* C. L. 4.)

SITES. (L. C.) With Miss Oliver? You say you have an engagement here now, with Miss Oliver?

CAPTAIN. (*to* C.) Most certainly I do.

(SITES *takes out his watch and looks at it.*)

SITES. I must be hypnotized.

CAPTAIN. You look surprised.

SITES. I? Not a bit. That's not surprise. It's beatific expression conveying the idea that I am at peace with the entire universe.

CAPTAIN. My only wonder is that Miss Oliver isn't here already.

(*Enter* HENRIETTA C. *from* L.)

HENRIETTA. (*crosses down* C. *one half*) I've kept my engagement, captain.

(*Surprise for* SITES, CROSBY *and* JULIA. *Picture.* HENRIETTA UP *stage* C. SITES L. C. CAPTAIN R. C. JULIA R.)

CAPTAIN. Your engagement! With me?

HENRIETTA. Certainly. Didn't you arrange to meet me here?

CAPTAIN. Really I—I—yes, yes of course. Ha! Ha! How do you do. How do you do.

JULIA. (*with offended dignity*) Then, if you will excuse me, I will go.

CAPTAIN. No, don't go. Please don't go. I—I— (*looking in dismay at* HENRIETTA, *and from her again to* JULIA)

SITES. Who holds the key to this Chinese puzzle?

HENRIETTA. This is no puzzle that I can see. I have an engagement with Captain Crosby. It is for him to say if he intends to keep it.

CAPTAIN. Of course—that is—I should like—if you would be kind enough——!

HENRIETTA. (*to* SITES) You see how it is. Will you act in the Captain's stead?

CAPTAIN. Yes, do. There's a good fellow.

SITES. Not for a million dollars.

HENRIETTA. What?

SITES. I'm the tail to nobody's kite. If you have an engagement with the captain—go with him. (*goes* L.)

HENRIETTA. (C. L.) Yes, but you see I—I——

CAPTAIN. That's it exactly. She—she——

SITES. Very lucid, undoubtedly. But I don't quite grasp it.

CAPTAIN. Then, the fact is, I had no engagement here with Miss Oliver at all.

SITES. Which is the reason she kept it, I suppose.

HENRIETTA. You are not entitled to an explanation, Mr. Wright, but I will make one. As I was approaching a moment ago, I heard Captain Crosby claim an appointment here with me. To punish him for his presumption and to catch him in his own trap, I took his words in the way you said. And now—good-afternoon. (*starts* UP C.)

SITES. (L. C.) But that puts things in a different light, and I shall be only too happy to accompany you if you will permit me.

HENRIETTA. After the way you have behaved, I don't know that I ought.

SITES. (*goes to her*) But, in the goodness of your heart, you will.

HENRIETTA. Who could resist you. I am going to the pavilion.

SITES. Then permit me.

(SITES *and* HENRIETTA *exeunt* C. *to* R. CLEWS *enters* R. 4 *and exits* C. *to* R., *as if following them.*)

CAPTAIN. (*goes to* JULIA) That was too deep for me.

JULIA. Then you had no engagement with Miss Oliver?

CAPTAIN. Of course not. My claiming one was just a subterfuge.

JULIA. And yet she arrived so opportunely. It is really most extraordinary. (*crosses* C. L.)

CAPTAIN. (*to* C.) The whole thing is most extraordinary, but what does it matter since it leaves us together.

JULIA. (*sitting on bench at foot of tree and tracing in sand with parasol*) Together!

CAPTAIN. By the way, Miss Bird, did you ever play words?

JULIA. "Words?"

CAPTAIN. Yes. It's very simple. One traces a letter in the sand—the other follows with another letter and whoever adds the one which makes a word loses the game. Shall we try it?

JULIA. Just as you like.

CAPTAIN. (*sits on bench* R. *of her*) Then we will. You make the first letter, please.

JULIA. (*tracing*) L.

CAPTAIN. (*tracing with stick*) O.

JULIA. (*tracing*) V.

CAPTAIN. (*tracing*) E.

JULIA. You are beaten. That makes a word.

CAPTAIN. Does it? What word?

JULIA. Love! L O V E lo—(*stops embarrassed*)

CAPTAIN. So it is. How stupid of me. Such a common word, too. Now it is my turn to begin. (*tracing*) Y.

JULIA. I think I had better not try it any more.

CAPTAIN. Just once, please.

JULIA. (*tracing*) O.

CAPTAIN. (*tracing*) U. I am beaten again, that spells "you." (*tracing an I*) And now, Miss Bird, how does it read?

JULIA. (*reading*) "I love you."

CAPTAIN. Yes, and I love you. I have loved you since the first moment I saw you.

JULIA. But you have known me only since yesterday.

CAPTAIN. Love is no question of time. It either is, or is not. I love you. And you—don't you care for me, just a little?

JULIA. More than a little.

CAPTAIN. Then I am the happiest man in the world.

(CAPTAIN *kisses* JULIA. LORD B. *enters* C. *from* L., *sees* CAPTAIN *kiss* JULIA.)

LORD B. (*crosses down* C.) I say, Crosby, are you old enough to be her father, or are you her uncle.

CAPTAIN. (*rises, faces* BRAZENFACE) I would have you to understand that this lady is to be my wife.

LORD B. That won't do. That won't do at all. you know. Your mess would cut you dead. you know they would.

CAPTAIN. Of all the impudent things I ever heard

of, this is the worst. Just mind your own business, Brazenface.

LORD B. That's all right. I don't blame you for falling in love with her—deuced pretty girl I tell you —but how will it end, eh?

CAPTAIN. It will end by Miss Bird becoming Mrs. Crosby. Come now, Brazenface, if you loved a girl and she loved you, what would you do?

LORD B. Marry her in a minute.

CAPTAIN. And that's what I intend to do in spite of them all.

LORD B. (*shakes his hand*) Good boy. I admire pluck, even when the man is making an ass of himself, so if I can do anything for you, just call on me.

CAPTAIN. And you'll do it?

LORD B. Of course I will.

CAPTAIN. Then you have the chance right now. My uncle is coming. (*indicating* R. 2) Tell him we have made up our minds to be married and nothing can prevent us.

LORD B. (C.) I'll do it.

CAPTAIN. Thanks. Thanks.

(*Exeunt* CAPTAIN *and* JULIA L. 2. *Enter* CLINGSTONE R. 2.)

CLINGSTONE. (R. C.) I saw you speaking to him.

LORD B. (C. L.) And everything is all right.

CLINGSTONE. Thank you. Thank you.

LORD B. Everything is all right. They are going to be married.

CLINGSTONE. Married! Oh dear! Oh dear! Why doesn't he think of his future.

LORD B. He hasn't time now. He's too busy with his present.

CLINGSTONE. But he will be ruined.

LORD B. Let up, old chap, let up. Any man who

asks a girl to marry him and then backs out, is a cad. Crosby isn't that kind of a fellow.

CLINGSTONE. I am so distressed I don't know which way to turn.

LORD B. (*indicates* L.) Then turn this way and go for a brandy and soda.

CLINGSTONE. Brandy and soda!

LORD B. Yes. Best thing in the world for that distressed feeling.

CLINGSTONE. I would not touch such a thing, sir. Brandy and soda, indeed! No sir. I will go back to the hotel and get a glass of milk.

(*Exit* CLINGSTONE R. 2.)

LORD B. Since he won't have one, I'l have two. Then I'll join the fair Miss Bonds on the pier.

(*Exit* LORD B. L. U. E. *Enter* SITES *and* HENRIETTA C. *from* R., CLEWS *following.*)

SITES. (*crosses* DOWN C.) After all there is nothing so sweet in life as love.

HENRIETTA. (*crosses* DOWN L. C.) In people who have come to years of discretion. What does a boy of thirty or thirty-five know of real affection.

SITES. Ah. You choose the devotion of a man of riper years.

(HENRIETTA *sits on bench at foot of tree.* CLEWS *hiding behind arch* R. C., *listening.*)

HENRIETTA. Undoubtedly. Give me the man of judgment and experience. In my estimation a man of sterling character, like you, Mr. Wright, is worth a million of the butterfly young men usually met in such places as this.

SITES. You flatter me. You flatter me.

HENRIETTA. Not in the least. Though almost a stranger I have formed my opinion of you.

SITES. A good one, I hope.

HENRIETTA. How could it help being a good one.

SITES. (*sitting beside* HENRIETTA) Thank you! Thank you! As for my opinion of you, Miss Oliver, I could not adequately express it, even if I possessed the poetry of a Shakespeare and the oratory of a Demosthenes.

HENRIETTA. Oh, Mr. Wright——

SITES. Since my eye first beheld you, my soul has been attuned to yours, and I have yearned to whisper in your ear the three little words "I love you." When I die those words will be found graven on my heart, for unlike woman's vows, they are not traced in sand.

(SITES *points to sand at foot of tree, sees the words there and gazes at them in amazement. Rises and still staring at them, crosses to back of bench as though to view them from there.*)

SITES. There's been a mind reader round here.

HENRIETTA. (*pointing* L. 2, *after* JULIA *and* CAPTAIN) I hardly think so.

SITES. (*looking* L. 2) Of course.

HENRIETTA. (*aside*) I must get down to business.

SITES. (*sitting*) Er—how far had I got?

HENRIETTA. Far enough to make it advisable for me to tell what I think of you.

SITES. Oh, do let me finish, now I've started.

HENRIETTA. No, no!

SITES. But that was only a warming up canter. Give me a chance to show what I can do when I've really struck my gait.

HENRIETTA. After me.

SITES. Let me show you how I can go in the home stretch. I'm the greatest finisher in the business.

HENRIETTA. For the present I'll take your word for it. And now, permit me.

SITES. Of course, if you insist——

HENRIETTA. I do. My opinion of you is this: You are a man of action, a man of deeds. There is no stroke too bold for you to take if you think the return will justify it.

SITES. That's right. In my business, I'll take a chance with anybody.

HENRIETTA. It was no search for gaiety that brought you here from San Francisco, for I believe you said you came from there?

SITES. Yes, I am from San Francisco.

(*Pantomime for* CLEWS UP C., *showing point one has been scored.*)

HENRIETTA. Then I am confident it was something important that caused you to make the journey, something probably involving a large sum of money.

SITES. What a woman you are. You read me like a book! (*looks round cautiously*) It was something important that brought me. If the reporters knew I was here I would be in all the New York papers to-morrow.

HENRIETTA. But what is to prevent them from knowing?

SITES. The fact that I have taken another name.

HENRIETTA. Then your name isn't Wright?

SITES. No more than yours.

(*Business for* CLEWS UP C. R.)

HENRIETTA. Then there is a mystery—and I just love mysteries.

SITES. What brought me here was a forgery.

(*Business for* CLEWS.)

HENRIETTA. How interesting.

SITES. A forgery of $50,000.

CLEWS. (UP C. R. *Aside*) No doubt about it! He's our man. I'll go for assistance. (*is about to exit* C. R. *when* HENRIETTA *sees him. He pantomimes, conveying the idea he is going for help and exits* C. *to* R. HENRIETTA, *who has been falling in love with* SITES, *realizes what she has done and her heart smites her*)

SITES. It was this way. Before I started——

HENRIETTA. (*impulsively, rising*) Wicked woman that I am. What have I done? What have I done? Don't waste a moment or you will be captured. (SITES *stares in astonishment*) That man was a detective. He overheard your confession and has gone for help. If you are here when he returns you are lost.

SITES. (*rises, goes* C.. *Aside*) Wheels! I must sooth her. (*to* HENRIETTA, *soothingly*) There. There. Don't get excited and you'll soon get over it. You'll soon get over it.

HENRIETTA. (*wildly pleading*) But he'll be back in a moment, you will be put in jail, and I—I—shall be the cause of it, for I am a detective too.

SITES. (*aside, goes* C.) She's even forgot her business. But then, millinery generally does go to the head at last.

HENRIETTA. (*crosses to him*) Don't you understand? He was listening and heard all you said. If anything happens to you I shall never forgive myself! Never!

SITES. (*soothingly*) That's all right, little woman. That's all right. Hold up your head and breathe hard and it will soon pass away.

HENRIETTA. I came here purposely to trap you and get the reward. You treated me kindly and how have I repaid you? But there is yet time to escape, so fly—fly. (*crosses* UP C. L. *one half, looking after* CLEWS)

SITES. (*aside*) Now she wants me to fly! This must be fly-time round here.

HENRIETTA. (*turns* DOWN C.. *one half*) Can't I make you understand? Will nothing bring you to realize the position you are in? (*crosses* UP *again*)

SITES. (*aside*) If she fainted here it would be awkward.

HENRIETTA. (*crosses* DOWN *to him*) Go, for my sake, go! See, on my knees (*kneeling*) I beg of you, I implore you to escape.

SITES. (*aside*) It's another case of faint, sure. (*aloud and assisting* HENRIETTA *to bench*) Never mind! Never mind!

(SITES *takes* HENRIETTA'S *hand in his and rubs them vigorously.*)

HENRIETTA. (*rises, snatching hands away and crossing* R. C.) Are you insane?

SITES. (L. C. *Aside*) That's a sure sign.

HENRIETTA. (*going* DOWN *stage* R.) He won't believe me and he'll be taken—he'll be taken.

SITES. (*following* HENRIETTA) Tell me—tell me, little one, do you get these often?

(CLEWS *and two policemen enter* C. *from* R. CLEWS *points to* SITES *and policemen approach him with burlesque caution.* CLEWS *remains back* C. HENRIETTA *sees them.*)

HENRIETTA *crosses,* SITES *crosses*

HENRIETTA. There they are. There they are. They've come for you! They have come for you.

SITES. Oh, but she has 'em bad.

(*The policemen pounce on* SITES. *Violent struggle ensues with* CLEWS *watching and advising but taking no part.* SITES *finally overcome and seated on bench with policemen standing guard.*)

CLEWS We've got him! We've got him!

SITES. What is the meaning of this outrage?

CLEWS. Don't talk back, now, or you'll get it worse.

(POLICEMEN *threaten with clubs.*)

SITES. Somebody will pay for this.

CLEWS. Yes—Old man Sites!

SITES. I'll make it warm for you. I'll show you about treating me in such a manner before this lady.

CLEWS. (*laughing*) That's good, that is. (POLICEMAN *laugh silently and nudge each other. To* HENRIETTA) You must have fooled him in great shape.

HENRIETTA. Yes. I—I——

SITES. (*rises.* POLICEMEN *take hold of him*) How dare you address any remarks to her, sir.

CLEWS. (*laughing*) But this is rich. (*to* SITES) Why, she is the smartest female detective in the country.

SITES. You are greatly mistaken. That lady is a milliner.

CLEWS. Well, she *trimmed* you all right. (*to* HENRIETTA) Shall we search him here or take him to the hotel.

HENRIETTA. Not here. Not here.

SITES. What's that? Search me? Once for all I demand an explanation.

CLEWS. Then if you must know, my dear Mr. Bailey, you are under arrest for stealing $50,000 from Mr. Seymour Sites.

(SITES, *dumbfounded with amazement sinks onto bench. Then the absurdity of the situation strikes him and he laughs uproariously.*)

SITES. (*laughing*) And so—you arrest me—for robbing Sites?

CLEWS. (C.) That's the idea exactly.

SITES. (*laughing*) But don't you see, I—I—O this is the funniest thing I ever heard.

CLEWS. Now is your time to enjoy it. It will be different in half an hour.

SITES. (*laughing*) Yes, but—O—I shall die. I shall die. Why I—I am Sites. (*laughing uproariously.* POLICEMEN *look at each other in astonishment*)

HENRIETTA. You are Mr. Sites?

SITES. Yes. This is the funniest thing. (*laughs, crosses*)

CLEWS. (C. L., *disgusted*) See here. You did a clever piece of work. Now don't spoil your reputation by springing any such fairy story as that.

SITES. It isn't a fairy story. I am Seymour Sites of San Francisco whose cashier robbed him of $50,000. Here's one of my cards. (SITES *hands card to* CLEWS *who laughingly hands it to* HENRIETTA)

HENRIETTA. (C.) But you told me that was not your card and that you happened to have it because you formerly worked for Mr. Sites.

SITES. That was all for a purpose.

CLEWS. Too thin, my boy, altogether too thin. (*crosses*)

SITES. But I tell you I am Sites.

CLEWS. Then why are you here under an assumed name?

SITES. I got a tip Bailey was headed this way and came to capture him.

HENRIETTA. Then why did you take the name of Wright, the very one under which he is traveling.

SITES. Has Bailey taken the name of Wright, too?

CLEWS. It's no use trying the innocent dodge. It don't go.

SITES. Maybe it doesn't go. But as soon as I can get word to your chief, I'll see that you *do* go.

CLEWS. You threaten me, do you? Then we'll end this thing right here. Bring him along, boys.

(*The* POLICEMEN *approach* SITES.)

SITES. (*rises*) I'll brain the first man who lays a finger on me.

HENRIETTA. Just wait a minute, there. I have something to say about this case. (*to* SITES) You insist that you are Seymour Sites and not Bailey?

SITES. I should say I do.

HENRIETTA. What proofs have you of your claim?

SITES. Lots of 'em. My letters (*producing letters*) No. They are addressed to me under my assumed name. But, then, (*searching pockets*) I've got—got——

HENRIETTA. Well.

SITES. Never mind what I've got. I tell you I'm Sites.

HENRIETTA. But that isn't proof.

CLEWS. I should say not.

(*Enter* CLINGSTONE *and* ARABELLA R. 2.)

SITES. So you don't believe me. Then let me warn you. (*sees* CLINGSTONE) Ah! Ask him who I am.

CLINGSTONE. (R. C.) I beg your pardon.

SITES. Come now, Wayland, old man——!

ARABELLA. (R.) I never heard of such impertinence.

SITES. Let yesterday be yesterday. Take a good look at me, recall the scenes of our youth, and then say who I am.

CLINGSTONE. This is really remarkable. Yesterday he thought I was a confidence man. To-day he requests me to recall the scenes of his youth. The poor creature, I suppose, is mentally unbalanced.

SITES. (*starts for* CLINGSTONE, POLICEMEN *hold him back*) I'm not unbalanced now, but I shall be if this keeps up. What I want to know is, am I or am I not Seymour Sites.

CLINGSTONE. Mr. Sites! Certainly not! He is a Christian gentleman.

ARABELLA. And would never behave toward me, sir, as you did yesterday.

SITES. (*to* CLINGSTONE) But, didn't you call me by his name when we met?

CLINGSTONE. I did. But you repudiated it so emphatically that I was soon convinced of my error.

SITES. But that was all assumed. Now, Wayland, Wayland, old fellow, didn't we go to college together? Didn't we chum together? In scrapes, and out, were we ever divided?

CLINGSTONE. Really I, I——

SITES. Didn't we play together on the football eleven? Don't you remember the old signal 16-27-58-4-11-44 round the end, eh?

CLINGSTONE. Really I—I think it is my old college chum.

ARABELLA. Well, I don't. As he knows so much about confidence people he is probably one himself.

HENRIETTA. (*to* CLINGSTONE) Could you swear he is your old friend?

CLINGSTONE. I am not in the habit of swearing—but—I think I could.

SITES. Of course you could.

ARABELLA. You could do nothing of the kind, Wayland.

CLINGSTONE. Well—no—since my sister has spoken I am afraid I couldn't.

THE WRONG MR. WRIGHT— Galley 25

SITES. (*sinks on tree seat*) And yet, people wonder at crime.

(*Enter* LORD B. *and* TILLIE L. 2.)

HENRIETTA. Your niece, Miss Bonds, would know you, of course.

SITES. Would she? I am beginning to doubt it.

HENRIETTA. We'll try her anyway. (*to* TILLIE) Pardon the question, but is this gentleman your uncle?

LORD B. He seems to be everybody's uncle.

TILLIE. Well, I should say not. I never set eyes on him in my life till yesterday.

SITES. For which I am deeply grateful.

HENRIETTA. Then you don't claim this lady as your niece?

SITES. Hardly. I've got trouble enough now.

HENRIETTA. But, if you are Mr. Sites, and Mr. Bonds is your nephew, Miss Bonds there, must be your niece.

SITES. (*rising*) That—Miss Bonds!

HENRIETTA. Certainly!

SITES. (*astounded*) Why—why—(*calmly*) It's a dream—all a dream—I'll wake up in a minute.

LORD B. What's it all about anyway?

CLEWS. That man there is the cleverest forger that ever worked in America.

SITES. But it's all a mistake.

LORD B. Of course it is. A man wouldn't dare to forge if he has a face like yours.

CLEWS. (*approaches* SITES) This case is a cinch. There's no mistake about it.

SITES. Don't you believe him.

(*Enter* FRED R. 4.)

LORD B. Of course I don't. Brace up, old chap, brace up. We'll pull you through.

(FRED *comes down* R. C.)

SITES. (*seeing* FRED) Ah, here's somebody who can settle the whole business. Do you know who he is?

HENRIETTA. That is Mr. Bonds, a nephew of Mr. Sites.

SITES. Then ask him who I am.

HENRIETTA. (*to* FRED) Mr. Bonds, there is some doubt as to the identity of this gentleman—will you kindly tell us who he is?

(FRED *misunderstands the situation and thinks* SITES *is trying to preserve his incog.*)

FRED. With pleasure.

SITES. (*sinks on seat*) Now, you smart people will soon see.

FRED. That is my uncle's former clerk. His name is Wright.

(HENRIETTA *disappointed.* CLEWS *and* POLICEMEN *triumphant.*)

SITES. (*rises, angry*) No. Fred! No! That's all off now. Tell the truth.

FRED. Sir.

SITES. Don't be a fool. Tell these people who I am.

FRED. I have done that already. (*apart. Crosses to* SITES. *All others* UP *stage half way talk in pantomime*) Keep it up. Keep it up—we can bluff them all right.

SITES. But I don't want to bluff them. I want you to say whether you are my nephew or not.

FRED. Your nephew? Certainly not. Ha, ha. The very idea. (*apart*) You're good. You're good. Keep it up.

SITES. You infernal young ass.

FRED. Excuse me, but I allow no one to talk to me in that manner except my uncle.

(SITES *almost explodes with wrath. Then he gulps it down and tries another tack.*)

SITES. Now, Fred, my boy, see here. This is a serious matter. They say I am——

CLEWS. (*steps forward.* POLICEMEN *go either side of tree*) Never mind what we say.

SITES. Well, then, Fred, it's this way——

CLEWS. Never mind about that either. All we want to know is who you are.

SITES. (*to* FRED) Then hang it all. Who am I?

FRED. To the best of my knowledge and belief you are Adolphus Wright of San Francisco. Now are you satisfied. (*apart*) You ought to be on the stage. Keep it up. Keep it up.

SITES. (*choking with rage*) All I can say for you is that in a competitive exhibition of natural and incurable idiots you'd have absolutely no difficulty in taking first prize in Class A.

FRED. I protest against being compelled to submit to such language from this fellow. (*apart*) I'm not so bad myself, am I?

HENRIETTA. (*steps forward*) Then you deny that he is your uncle Seymour Sites?

FRED. Of course I do.

HENRIETTA. If he is not your uncle, why did you, this morning, cash a draft for $2000.00 to which he had endorsed your uncle's signature?

SITES. Good! Good! Another Daniel come to judgment.

FRED. Why did I— (*to* SITES) They're on to us. I might as well confess.

SITES. What is there to confess? All you have to do is to drop that just before-the-battle-mother expression and tell the truth.

HENRIETTA. (*to* SITES) You admit you wrote the signature?

SITES. I should say so.

HENRIETTA. (*to* FRED) And you saw him write it and cashed the draft.

FRED. Yes.

CLEWS. That's all we want. (*to* POLICEMAN) Arrest him as an accomplice.

(*A* POLICEMAN *takes* FRED *in charge on his* L.)

SITES *and* FRED. A what?

CLEWS. A pal, if you like it better. He secured the money, knowing you had forged his uncle's name.

FRED. But he is my uncle.

CLEWS. Too late, young man. Too late.

SITES. Suffering sinful Sennacherib, but couldn't I swear a sizzling streak.

LORD B. (*down* L.) This is the bloomingest, funniest mixed-up thing I ever saw.

FRED. But what is it all about?

SITES. You're wonderful smartness has convinced them that I am Bailey and so they arrest me for robbing myself of my own money, and you cashing a draft, to which I had forged my own signature.

FRED. Absurd. (*to* CLEWS) Take my word for it, this is my uncle Seymour.

CLEWS. Oh, get out.

SITES. (*to* FRED) Keep it up. Keep it up. You're good. (*to* CLEWS) Take me away. I'm resigned to my fate.

(*Enter* JULIA *and* CAPTAIN R. 2.)

FRED. (*struggling*) But I am not. I'll be hanged if I'll submit to anything like this.

(FRED *and* POLICEMAN *struggle.*)

JULIA. How dare you lay a finger on him. How dare you treat my brother that way.

ALL. Your brother?

FRED. Yes. For she is my sister and that (*pointing to* TILLIE) is her maid.

TILLIE. That's right. Mr. Clingstone mistook me for Miss Bonds and she agreed to let me play the part. It's been lots of fun, but—but—(*looking at* LORD B.)

LORD B. I'll take you anyway.

HENRIETTA. (*to* SITES) Then she (TILLIE) is not your niece?

SITES. No, but this young lady is. Julia, tell the truth now, who am I?

JULIA. The real truth?

SITES. The real, real truth.

JULIA. Then you are my Uncle Seymour Sites.

SITES. At last.

(*Enter* FRONT R. 4, *with telegram, crosses down to* HENRIETTA, *give same.*)

CLEWS. Very clever. But not quite good enough for me.

FRONT. (*to* HENRIETTA) Telegram for you. Operator said it was important. (*exit* R. U.)

HENRIETTA. (*opens telegram, glances at signature*) From the chief. (*reads*) "You are on the wrong track. Bailey captured this morning in New York. Wired news to San Francisco. Sites' manager replies: "Sites is at Old Point Comfort under the name of Adolphus Wright. You report capture to him. Then return with Clews immediately."

LORD B. There you are, old chap. I told you we'd pull you through.

SITES. (*to* CLEWS) And now what have you to say for yourself?

CLEWS. We've been after the wrong man, sir, and I hope you won't think it necessary to report anything unpleasant to headquarters. (*exit with* POLICEMEN C. R.)

SITES. (*to* HENRIETTA) And you?

HENRIETTA. I have conducted this case so badly I shall resign my position immediately.

SITES. (*goes to her*) Let me give you another. Take me into custody.

HENRIETTA. You are my prisoner.

SITES. For life.

CURTAIN

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